FIRE AND SWORD

IN

THE SUDAN

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE OF FIGHTING AND SERVING THE DERVISHES.

1879—1895.

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It was not, however, to be supposed that the Mahdist victories in the east and west would remain entirely undisputed. King John, who had been carrying on a war in the interior, now determined to avenge the attack on Gondar, and therefore resolved to march against Gallabat, and utterly destroy the enemies of his country and religion. On Abu Anga's death, the Khalifa appointed one of his former subordinates, Zeki Tummal of the Taaisha tribe, to take the command and to complete the fortifications of Gallabat, which had already been

begun. During Abu Anga's lifetime, his army had been divided into five parts, under the respective commands of Ahmed Wad Ali, Abdalla Ibrahim, Hamdan (one of Abu Anga's brothers), while Zeki himself commanded some two thousand five hundred mulazemin. The force of Yunes still remained under the command of Ibrahim Dafalla.

King John now collected an immense army, and moved towards Gallabat. The Dervishes were in great consternation, and did all they could to strengthen their fortifications. King John's army was divided into two portions: one division was made up of his own tribe, the Tigré, and King Menelek's troops, under the command of Ras Alula; whilst the other portion consisted of the Amhara legions under Ras Barambaras. Arriving almost within range of Gallabat, they pitched their camp, and began the attack the following morning. The lines of Gallabat, which were some fifteen miles in circumference, were defended only at intervals by Zeki's troops; and the Amhara leader, being well informed by spies, made a determined attack on the western side, which was weakly held. After a short resistance, they succeeded in penetrating; and the remainder of the garrison were in the unpleasant position of having to defend themselves from the outside, whilst, within, the enemy was pillaging the town. Had the Amhara, instead of looting, attacked the garrison from the rear, they would no doubt have succeeded in capturing the position; but they concerned themselves only with pillaging and driving out of the town thousands of women and children. King John, who was in his tent, having received news that the Amhara, whom he had frequently accused of cowardice,

had succeeded in entering the lines, whilst his own tribe, the Tigré, had failed, fell into a passion; and, ordering his followers to carry him on his seat—a small gold angareb covered with cushions and carpets—he was brought into the midst of the fighting line. The defenders, noticing a crowd of followers clothed in velvet and gold, directed their fire on them; and when King John had almost reached the defences, he was struck by a bullet, which, breaking his right arm above the elbow, entered his body. The courageous man, declaring that his injury was of no consequence, continued urging on his men, but soon fell back unconscious on his couch, and was carried to the rear by his followers, who had suffered great loss. The news that he was wounded spread amongst his troops like wildfire; and, though on the point of success, they retired. On the evening of the 9th March, 1889, King John expired in his tent. An effort was made to keep his death secret; but the news gradually leaked out, and the Amhara, deserting the camp in the night with all their loot, returned to their homes.

Ras Alula, being the most important of the Tigré chiefs, nominated Hailo Mariam as their temporary ruler; but fearing the possibility of dissensions breaking out amongst his unruly troops, he thought he had better return to his country, and therefore ordered a retreat.

In fear and trembling, the Mahdists awaited the renewal of the Abyssinian attack the next morning; but when the sun rose, they found, to their surprise, that the white tents which had been visible the previous day had disappeared. Zeki Tummal now sent out troops to

reconnoitre; and they returned with the joyful news that the Abyssinians had retired. They had also learnt from the wounded that King John was dead. A council was immediately held, and, as the enemy had carried off a number of the Mahdist women and cattle,—amongst them much of the late Abu Anga's property,—it was agreed that they should be pursued. The Abyssinians had pitched their camp about half a day's journey from Gallabat; already half the army was on the move; and Ras Alula, Hailo Mariam, the temporary Negus, and other chiefs were on the point of breaking up the camp, when they were suddenly attacked by the Dervishes. Hailo Mariam was killed at the tent-door, within which lay King John's body, already partly embalmed, in a wooden coffin. Ras Abula beat a hurried retreat, leaving the camp in the hands of his enemies. The Dervishes captured an immense amount of booty, including horses, mules, arms, tents, coffee, etc.; they did not, however, succeed in re-capturing the women, who had already been carried on ahead. In Hailo Mariam's tent King John's crown was found. It is doubtful whether this was the imperial Abyssinian crown, as it was made of silver gilt; his sword also was taken, as well as a letter to him from Her Majesty the Queen of England.

Neither the attack on Gallabat, nor the Dervish defeat of the rear-guard the following day, had by any means broken the Abyssinian army; but, owing to the accidental death of their king, the Dervish victory had been most complete. The country now fell into a state of internecine warfare; there were several aspirants for the throne, and dissensions and quarrels put a stop to

combined action. The Italians had been in occupation of Massawa since the beginning of 1885, and had occupied some of the adjacent country. This fact reacted satisfactorily on the Dervish occupation of Gallabat; for they were well aware that the Abyssinians would be fully occupied with their European enemies; and once more they began raiding the Amhara frontier.

Whilst the garrison of Gallabat was in danger of destruction at the hands of King John, Osman Wad Adam was in considerable peril in the west. On the death of Sultan Yusef, his troops raided the country in all directions, and his Emirs were guilty of the greatest oppression and cruelty. Thousands of women and children were declared to be ghanima (booty), and dragged to Fasher by main force. The people were in despair; and the distress and anguish extended to the limits of Dar Tama. Here a youth resided who hailed from Omdurman, and probably belonged to one of the riverain tribes, but had been driven from his own home, and, under the shade of a wide spreading Gemmaiza (wild fig) tree, sat and read the Kuran. He had intended proceeding to Bornu and the Fellata country,—as far away as possible from the tyrannical Sudan,—when some of the unfortunate people who had been robbed of all they possessed, came and told him of their misfortunes. A party of Dervishes, they said, had arrived at the neighbouring village, had seized their cattle, and were about to carry them off, together with the women and girls of the village, under the pretext that they had been ordered to undertake a pilgrimage to Fasher, and had not done so. "If you do not wish to fight for your wives and children, for what then will you fight?" asked the young man.

"Do you not know that he who falls fighting for his women and children goes straight to Paradise?" The effect of these words on the people resembled a spark falling into a barrel of gunpowder. Hastening back to their village, they demanded the instant liberation of their families; and when this was refused, they fought for it. The Mahdists were annihilated; and the infuriated villagers mutilated their bodies. Their example was followed by other villages with equal success; and, in a few days, Dar Tama had shaken itself free from its enemies. But who was the originator of this movement which had already been so successful? It was the young man under the Gemmaiza tree, who lived there as a hermit, subsisting only on some dry bread and a little grain. A pilgrimage to see him was at once organised; the people called him Abu Gemmaiza, adored him as a saint, and looked upon him as the liberator of the fatherland.

The Emir Abdel Kader Wad Delil, who was then residing at Kebkebia, and had heard of the massacre of his men, now advanced on Dar Tama, determined to avenge it; but he was defeated, and barely escaped with his life. Khatem Musa, on his way from Fasher, suffered a like fate. Osman Wad Adam, furious at the losses he had sustained, resolved to annihilate his enemies, and, with this object in view, despatched his assistant, Mohammed Wad Bishara, and a large number of his mulazemin to Kebkebia, to unite with Wad Delil and Khatem; but scarcely had he arrived, when he was attacked by the hosts of Abu Gemmaiza, who were marching on Fasher. Defeated with great loss, he fell back on that town. Adam now fully realised the

seriousness of the situation, and summoned a council: several of the Emirs were for evacuating the province at once, when the news suddenly arrived that Abu Gemmaiza was dead. As a matter of fact, to the great good fortune of Fasher, he had been taken seriously ill of small-pox at Kebkebia. The excited multitudes refused either to return or disperse; and, electing his assistant as his successor, they continued their advance on Fasher; but, in spite of their former victories, their belief in their leader's success had waned when he had fallen ill, and when he died, it vanished altogether.

Osman Wad Adam had taken up a position in the south end of the city; and when the rebels advanced to the attack, they were driven back to Rahad Tendelti with fearful loss. Abu Gemmaiza's successor was killed, and his troops, dispersing in all directions, were pursued and slaughtered. The whole country seemed covered with dead bodies; but Fasher and Darfur were saved. There is a curious coincidence in the dates of these momentous occurrences in the East and West Sudan: the previous year, both armies had advanced—the one to Darfur and the other to Abyssinia; both had been attacked by their enemies in their fortifications—the one by King John, and the other by Abu Gemmaiza, in the same month; and both had been unexpectedly successful.

Previous, however, to these occurences, the Khalifa had again directed his attention towards Egypt. He had questioned several persons regarding the country; and they had excited in him an avaricious longing for the grand palaces, large gardens, and immense harems.

of white women (he himself had Black in abundance). Of course the most suitable man to undertake operations against Egypt was Nejumi. He was an exceptionally brave man, and, when a simple merchant, had travelled a great deal, knew the country well, and, moreover, was an ardent devotee to the cause of Mahdism, to which he had won over great numbers. The greater part of his force consisted of tribesmen of the Nile valley; many had seen Egypt, and had until recently much intercourse with the frontier tribes of Upper Egypt. Such were the outward and visible reasons which the Khalifa brought forward when selecting the chief; but, in reality, he was well aware that a campaign against Egypt was a serious undertaking; and, on this account, he was anxious not to involve in it his own relatives, and the western tribes who were his special adherents. Nejumi, therefore, with his Jaalin and Danagla, and a proportion of Baggaras, formed the expedition; but the two former, being followers of the Khalifa Sherif, Abdullahi always looked upon as his secret enemies. Should the campaign be successful,—and he never for a moment doubted the capacity and devotion of its leader,—then so much the better, he would have conquered a new country; but should the Epyptian troops succeed in repelling the invasion, then the remnant of his defeated forces would retire on Dongola, with heavy loss, and would be so far weakened as to be unworthy of further consideration.

He therefore despatched Yunes Wad ed Dekeim as Emir of the Dongola Province, and to hold the country, whilst Nejumi was to receive his orders from Yunes, and proceed with the advanced troops. The Dongola Pro-

vince, at this period, it must be remembered, was entirely under Baggara domination. Amongst the reinforcements despatched thence were Ahmed Wad Gar en Nebbi and some of the Batahin tribesmen, who came from the country north of the Blue Nile, between the Shukria district and the river. Many of this tribe had been previously despatched to Dongola and Berber; and now the few who were left refused to comply with the Khalifa's orders, in consequence of which Gar en Nebbi had deserted, and, being pursued, had wounded one of the Khalifa's men. Abdullahi, indignant at this disregard of his orders, had despatched Abdel Baki, accompanied by Taher Wad el Obeid, to seize by force all the Batahin; the latter now fled in all directions, but, with the exception of a very few, were captured. During the pursuit Abdel Baki, guided by Wad el Obeid, suffered severely from thirst; and this he imputed to the ill-will of the latter, who, in consequence, was deprived of his position and thrown into chains at Omdurman. Abdel Baki now brought in sixty-seven men of the Batahin, with their wives and children. This tribe was celebrated for its bravery during the Government days; and now the Khalifa, who had already privately given his views on the matter to the judges, ordered them to be summoned before the Court. It was unanimously decided that the Batahin were mukhalefin (disobedient). "And what is the punishment for disobedience?" asked the Khalifa. "Death," was the reply of the judges. They were sent back to prison, and the Khalifa busied himself with carrying the sentence into execution. In accordance with his orders, three scaffolds were immediately erected in the market-place, and, after midday

prayers, the ombeÿa was sounded and the great war-drum was beaten, summoning all the Khalifa's subjects to follow him. Riding to the parade ground, he dismounted and seated himself on a small angareb, whilst his followers collected around him, some sitting and some standing. The sixty-seven Batahin were now brought before him, with their hands tied behind their backs, escorted by Abdel Baki's men, whilst their unfortunate wives and children ran after them crying and screaming. The Khalifa gave instructions that the women and children were to be separated from the men, and, summoning Ahmed ed Dalia, Taher Wad el Jaali, and Hassan Wad Khabir, consulted them in an undertone; the latter then went forward to the Batahin, and instructed the escort and prisoners to follow them to the market-place. After a delay of a quarter of an hour, the Khalifa got up, and we all walked on behind him. Arrived at the market-place, a terrible scene awaited us.

The unfortunate Batahin had been divided into three parties, one of which had been hanged, a second had been decapitated, and a third had lost their right hands and left feet. The Khalifa himself stopped in front of the three scaffolds, which were almost broken by the weights of the bodies, whilst close at hand lay a heap of mutilated people, their hands and feet lying scattered on the ground; it was a shocking spectacle. They did not utter a sound, but gazed in front of them, and tried to hide from the eyes of the crowd the terrible sufferings they were enduring. The Khalifa now summoned Osman Wad Ahmed, one of the Kadis, who was an intimate friend of Khalifa Ali, and a member of the

Batahin tribe; and pointing to the mutilated bodies, he said to Osman, "You may now take what remains of your tribe home with you." The poor man was too shocked and horrified to be able to answer.

After riding round the scaffolds, the Khalifa proceeded along the street leading to the mosque; and here Ahmed ed Dalia had been continuing his bloody work; twenty-three decapitated bodies lay stretched along the roadside; these unfortunates had calmly met their death, submitting to the inevitable. Several of them, as is the custom amongst the Arabs, had given proof of their courage by uttering a few sentences, such as: "Death is ordained for everyone." "See! to-day is my holy day." "He who has not seen a brave man die, let him come and look here." Each one of these sixty-seven men had met his death heroically. The Khalifa's work was done; he was satisfied with it, and rode home. On his arrival there, by way of an act of clemency, he sent one of his orderlies with instructions that the women and children of the murdered men should be set free; he might just as well have distributed them as slaves.

In spite of all these horrors, I was secretly rejoicing, for I had heard that letters from home were on their way; not only were there letters, but I had also been told, confidentially, by some merchants who had come from Berber, that there were two boxes of money for me. I scarcely dared think about it, and to wait patiently was no easy matter. One morning, whilst I was sitting at the door, a camel laden with two boxes was brought up; and the man asked to be taken before the Khalifa, saying that he had arrived with letters and goods from Osman Digna. The Khalifa, being apprised,

of this, ordered the boxes to be sent to the Beit el Mal, and the letters to be given to his clerks. I was wild with impatience; but it was the Khalifa's pleasure not to summon me till after sunset, and then he handed me the letters. They were, as I expected, from my brothers and sisters, expressing their great delight at having at last received news direct from me. One letter was written in Arabic, and addressed to the Khalifa, and contained profuse thanks to him for his kindness to me, recommending me to him for further assurances of his good-will, for which they sent many expressions of gratitude. This letter, which had been written by Professor Wahrmund, was composed in such flattering terms that the Khalifa had it read aloud the same evening in the mosque; and so gratified was he, that he ordered the boxes to be made over to me. Meanwhile, I translated to him my letters, which contained only private and personal information, and in which my brothers and sisters told me they had sent a travelling-bag for the Khalifa in token of their devotion to him, begging him to accept this trifling present, which was quite unworthy of his exalted position. He expressed his readiness to accept it, and ordered me to bring it to him the next morning. He then sent two of his people, so that the boxes might be opened in their presence; and, late that night, we went to the Beit el Mal, and there opened them. They contained £200, twelve ordinary watches, some razors and looking-glasses, some newspapers, a German translation of the Kuran, and the Khalifa's present. These things were all handed over to me; and, having read my letters once again, I literally devoured the newspapers. News from home!

There were only a few numbers of the "Neue Freie Presse," but quite sufficient to afford me, who had had no news for six years, the pleasure of reading at night-time for months. I gradually got to know them by heart, from the political leader down to the last advertisement, in which an elderly maiden lady advertised that she was anxious to find a kindred spirit with a view to matrimony. Father Ohrwalder came to me secretly by night to borrow the papers, and studied them just as conscientiously as I did,—only I do not suppose that he paid quite so much attention to the last advertisement!

Early the next morning, taking the present with me, I went to the Khalifa; he told me to open it, and when he saw all the little crystal boxes, silver-topped bottles, brushes, razors, scissors, etc., etc., he was greatly surprised. I had to explain to him their various uses; and he then sent for the Kadis, who, in duty bound, were obliged to express even greater astonishment than he, though I had no doubt that several of them had seen such things before. Then, without any further delay, he sent for his clerk, and ordered him to write a letter to my brothers and sisters, in which he himself informed them of the honourable position I held in his service; he invited them to come to Omdurman and visit me, and gave them the assurance that they would be free to return. He also ordered me to write in the same strain; and, although I knew perfectly well that my people would never avail themselves of such an invitation, which was merely a spontaneous outburst of delight, I took good care to warn them fully against thinking of it for an instant. The letters were then returned by the

man who had been sent by Osman Digna; and the latter was instructed by letter to forward them. The real reason, however, for the Khalifa's good-humour lay in the fact that his own tribe, the Taaisha, had arrived in Omdurman. They had marched through Kordofan to the White Nile at Tura el Hadra. The Khalifa had written to them that they should come to take possession of the countries which the Lord their God had ordained to be theirs; and on their arrival they certainly behaved as if they were sole masters. They appropriated everything they could lay their hands on: camels, cows, and donkeys were forcibly carried off from their owners; men and women who had the misfortune to cross their path, were robbed of their clothing and jewellery; and the populations of the countries through which they passed bitterly rued the day which had made a western Arab their ruler. For their convenience, the Khalifa erected immense grain depôts all along the roads by which they travelled; and, on their arrival at the river, ships and steamers were ready to transport them to Omdurman. But, before they reached the city, the Khalifa ordered them to halt on the right bank of the river; and, dividing them into two sections, he had all the men and women freshly clothed at the expense of the Beit el Mal; and they then were brought in detachments, at intervals of two or three days, to Omdurman. In order to make the populace thoroughly understand that the new masters of the country had arrived, Abdullahi drove out of their houses all the inhabitants of that portion of the city lying between the mosque and Omdurman Fort, and handed it over to the Taaisha as their residence. Other ground was allotted to those

who had been forced to give up their houses, and they were promised assistance from the Beit el Mal in order to rebuild; but, of course, this was mere empty form, and resulted in their having to shift entirely for themselves.

In order to facilitate the maintenance of his tribe, and as grain began to rise in price, the Khalifa issued an order for all grain stored in the houses to be taken to the meshra el minarata (grain docks), under pain of confiscation; and, having obtained the services of some of his own myrmidons, he ordered them to sell this grain at the lowest possible rate to the Taaisha; and the money thus obtained he divided amongst the original owners, who, in their turn, were obliged to re-purchase at the high rates from other sources. This wholesale robbery can be better understood, when I explain that the money paid by the Taaisha for ten ardebs of grain would scarcely pay for two ardebs purchased in the ordinary manner.

When the supply of grain at Omdurman was diminishing, he despatched messengers to the Gezira to confiscate what was still there; and, in this manner, by publicly showing his preference for his own tribe, he completely estranged himself from his former followers. This, however, was a matter of little concern to him, as, by the advent of the Taaisha Arabs, he had acquired a reinforcement of several thousands of warriors.

After the Mahdi's death, the Khalifa had sent four messengers to Cairo with letters addressed to Her Majesty the Queen of England, His Majesty the Sultan, and His Highness the Khedive, in which he summoned them to submit to his rule and to adopt Mahdism. The

messengers returned from Cairo, where due note had been made of this insolent demand, without any answer; and the Khalifa was greatly offended. Early in 1889, however, when he had decided to send Nejumi to invade Egypt, he again despatched four messengers to Egypt, conveying his final warning; but these were kept for a time at Assuan, and again sent back without any answer.

The campaigns in the east and west having been successfully concluded, the revolt of Abu Gemmaiza having been suppressed, and King John of Abyssinia having been killed, and his head despatched with others to Omdurman, the Khalifa now sent it to Yunes at Dongola to be forwarded by him to Wadi Halfa, as a warning, and as a proof of his victory over all those who refused to believe in the Mahdi. Having overcome his difficulties, and being strengthened by the arrival of fresh contingents of Arabs, the Khalifa now considered that the time had come when he might venture an attack on Egypt, and conquer it. Consequently, Nejumi received special instructions to start forthwith, with all under his command; and, avoiding Wadi Halfa, to capture Assuan, and there await further orders. In addition to his own followers, Nejumi had been reinforced by the Batahin, the Homr, and other Arabs of whom the Khalifa was anxious to rid himself; and with these he quitted Dongola early in May, 1889. Meanwhile, the Egyptian Government had been kept well informed of the advance of this ill-equipped force, and had taken all precautions; whilst Nejumi, instead of material support, received continual orders from Yunes to hurry on; and it was not till he had arrived

within the Egyptian frontier that some reinforcements of Jaalin, under Haj Ali, reached him. At the village of Argin, a portion of his troops, contrary to his orders, had descended from the desert high ground to the river, and, coming in contact with the troops of the Wadi Halfa garrison under Wodehouse Pasha, sustained considerable loss.

Meanwhile, Grenfell Pasha, Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, having started with a force from Assuan, wrote a letter to Nejumi, in which he pointed out the danger of the situation and how impossible it was for him to hope to be successful. He therefore summoned him to surrender; but this Nejumi stubbornly refused to do; and a battle ensued at Toski, in which General Grenfell and the Egyptian army utterly annihilated the Mahdists. Nejumi and almost all of his Emirs were killed; thousands were taken prisoners; and only a very few succeeded in escaping back to Dongola.

The Khalifa had ridden to the Beit el Mal, and was praying on the banks of the Nile, when mounted men arrived in hot haste from Dongola, and handed letters to his secretary, who, for the moment, suppressed the news, and only read it to him when he returned home. The letters described the death of Nejumi and the destruction of his army; and the effect on the Khalifa was terrible. He had no great confidence, it is true, in the tribes who had gone forward to invade Egypt; but, at the same time, their annihilation was a frightful blow to him. He had hoped that they would either have been victorious, or would have beaten a safe retreat; but now he had lost upwards of sixteen thousand of his men; and he at once thought the Government would advance.

and re-occupy Dongola. For three days he did not go near his harem; and, day and night, I was obliged to stay at his door and pretend to sympathise with him in these occurrences, though secretly I was rejoicing. He at once despatched reinforcements to Yunes; but, at the same time, sent him instructions that, should the Government advance, he should not attempt to oppose the army, but was to retreat with his entire force to Sannum, in Dar Shaigia.

But disasters never come singly: grain rose daily in price. No rain had fallen the previous year, and the crops in consequence had been very bad; the parties who had been sent to the Gezira had orders to procure grain by force at the rate fixed by the Khalifa. Of course those who had any at once hid it, and denied having anything; but in truth there was really very little in the land. Famine first broke out in the Province of Berber, which was entirely dependent on the Gezira for supplies; and here Osman Wad ed Dekeim was obliged to disperse his men and horses throughout various parts of the country.

The irrigation of this province is carried on by water-wheels at intervals along the river banks; and even in prosperous times the supply of grain is scarcely sufficient to meet the wants of the local inhabitants; there was therefore now considerable difficulty in maintaining all Osman's people as well. Several of the inhabitants wandered to Omdurman, which was already over-populated; and here the situation became most critical: the price of grain rose at first to forty dollars, and subsequently to sixty dollars, the ardeb. The rich could purchase grain; but the poor died wholesale.

Those were terrible months at the close of 1880; the people had become so thin that they scarcely resembled human beings,—they were veritably but skin and bone. These poor wretches would eat anything, no matter how disgusting,—skins of animals which had long since dried and become decayed, were roasted and eaten; the strips of leather which form the angareb (native bedstead) were cut off, boiled, and made into soup. Those who had any strength left went out and robbed; like hawks they pounced down on the bakers and butchers, and cared nothing for the blows of the kurbash, which invariably fell on their attenuated backs.

On one occasion, I remember seeing a man who had seized a piece of tallow, and had crammed it into his mouth before its owner could stop him. The latter jumped at his throat, closed his hands round it, and pressed it till the man's eyes protruded; but he kept his mouth tightly closed until he fell down insensible. In the market-places, the incessant cry was heard of "Gayekum! Gayekum!" (He is coming to you!), which meant that famished creatures were stealthily creeping round the places where the women had their few articles for sale, to protect which they were frequently obliged to lie upon them, and defend them with their hands and feet. The space between the Khalifa's and Yakub's houses was generally crowded at night with these wretched people, who cried aloud most piteously for bread. I dreaded going home; for I was generally followed by several of these famished beggears, who often attempted to forcibly enter my house; and at that time I had scarcely enough for my own slender

wants, besides having to help my own household and my friends, who had now become wretchedly poor.

One night,—it was full moon,—I was going home at about twelve o'clock, when, near the Beit el Amana (ammunition and arms stores), I saw something moving on the ground, and went near to see what it was. As I approached, I saw three almost naked women, with their long tangled hair hanging about their shoulders; they were squatting round a quite young donkey, which was lying on the ground, and had probably strayed from its mother, or been stolen by them. They had torn open its body with their teeth, and were devouring its intestines, whilst the poor animal was still breathing. I shuddered at this terrible sight, whilst the poor women, infuriated by hunger, gazed at me like maniacs. The beggars by whom I was followed, now fell upon them, and attempted to wrest from them their prey; and I fled from this uncanny spectacle.

On another occasion, I saw a poor woman who must formerly have been beautiful, but on whose emaciated face the death-struggle was visible, lying on her back in the street, whilst her little baby, scarcely a year old, was vainly trying to get some nourishment from its mother's already cold breasts. Another woman, passing by, took compassion on the little orphan, and carried it off.

One day, a woman of the Jaalin, who are perhaps the most moral tribe in the Sudan, accompanied by her only daughter, a lovely young girl, dragged herself wearily to my house; both were at death's door from starvation, and begged me to help them. I gave them what little I could; and the woman then said, "Take

this, my only daughter, as your slave; save her from death by starvation!" and, as she said this, the tears streamed down her poor wan cheeks, whilst in her weak, scarcely audible voice, she continued, "Do not fear that I shall molest you any further; only save her; do not let her perish!" I gave them all I could spare, and then asked them to leave me, telling them to return when they were in great want; but I never saw them again,—perhaps some charitable person took pity on them. Another woman was actually accused of eating her own child, and was brought to the police station for trial; but of what use was this?—in two days the poor creature died, a raving maniac!

Several sold their own children, both boys and girls, pretending they were their slaves,—this they did not to obtain money, but simply to save their lives; and, when this year of misery was over, some parents bought them back again at even higher prices. The dead lay in the streets in hundreds; and none could be found to bury them. The Khalifa issued orders that people were responsible for burying those who were found dead near their houses; and that, should they refuse to do so, their property would be confiscated., This had some effect; but, to save themselves trouble, they used to drag the bodies near their neighbours' houses; and this gave rise to frequent quarrels and brawls. Every day, the waters of the Blue and White Niles swept past Omdurman, carrying along hundreds of bodies of the wretched peasantry who had died along the banks,—a terrible proof of the awful condition of the country.

In Omdurman itself, the majority of those who died

belonged rather to the moving population, than to the actual inhabitants of the town; for the latter had managed to secrete a certain amount of grain, and the different tribes invariably assisted each other; but, in other parts of the Sudan, the state of affairs was considerably worse. I think the Jaalin, who are the most independent, as well as the proudest tribe in the Sudan, suffered more severely than the rest; several fathers of families, seeing that escape from death was impossible, bricked up the doors of their houses, and, united with their children, patiently awaited death. I have no hesitation in saying that in this way entire villages died out.

The inhabitants of Dongola, though they suffered considerably, were somewhat better off; and for this they had to thank Nejumi, whose departure had considerably reduced the population of the province. Between Abu Haraz, Gedaref, and Gallabat, the situation was worst of all. Zeki Tummal, at the commencement of the famine, had given orders to some of his myrmidons to forcibly collect all the grain in the neighbourhood; and this he stored for his soldiers, thus saving the bulk of his force, with the result that an immense proportion of the local inhabitants died of starvation. After a time, no one dared to go out into the streets without an escort; for they feared being attacked and eaten up; the inhabitants had become animals,—cannibals! One of the Emirs of the Homr tribe,—who, in spite of the terrible year, still preserved a fairly healthy appearance, —notwithstanding constant warning, insisted on going to visit a friend after sunset; but he never reached his friend, nor returned to his abode; the next morning,

his head was found outside the city, and I presume his body had already been consumed.

The Hassania, Shukria, Aggalium, Hammada, and other tribes had completely died out; and the once thickly populated country had become a desert waste. Zeki Tummal sent a detachment of his force to the southern districts of the Blue Nile, towards the Tabi, Begreg, Kukeli, Kashankero, and Beni Shangul mountains, the inhabitants of which, although they paid tribute to the Khalifa, refused to make a pilgrimage or provide warlike contingents. This he had done not so much with the idea of military operations, as to provide some means of maintaining his troops; but the commander, Abder Rasul succeeded in capturing a number of slaves, as well as a quantity of money.

The situation in Darfur was little better than that in Gedaref and Gallabat; the western provinces, such as Dar Gimr, Dar Tama, and Massalit, had no need of grain; but not being in complete subjection, they prevented its export to Fasher. Indeed, it seemed as if this famine had come as Heaven's punishment on all districts owning subjection to the Khalifa, whilst the neighbouring countries, which had had sufficient rest to cultivate their fields, had acquired enough grain for their maintenance. A few Omdurman merchants hired some vessels, and proceeeded to Fashoda, where they exchanged beads, copper rods, and money for dhurra; the undertaking succeeded, and now crowds of others followed their example, proceeding sometimes as far as the Sobat, whence they imported quantities of grain, thus enriching themselves, and saving their fellow-countrymen from terrible want. Had the King of

Fashoda, who was not then subject to the Khalifa, forbidden the export, half Omdurman would have perished. At length, the rain fell; the thirsty land was refreshed; the crops sprang up; harvest was near; and the whole country once more rejoiced at the prospect of help and deliverance. But now the atmosphere became obscure with swarms of locusts of an unusual size, and the prospect of a rich harvest vanished; everything, however, was not destroyed by this plague, which, from that date, has become one of annual occurrence. The Khalifa, anxious for the welfare of his own tribe, now forced the natives to sell the little grain they had collected, at an absurdly low price, to his agents; but small as this was, in comparison with the price he ought to have paid, he determined to still further economise, and, consequently, ordered Ibrahim Adlan to proceed personally to the Gezira, and induce the inhabitants to give up their dhurra of their own free-will, and without payment. Adlan, who thoroughly disapproved of this measure now left; and his enemies, seizing the occasion of his absence, did all they could to bring about his fall. This able official had, by his thoroughness and sagacity, risen high in the Khalifa's favour; but ambition induced him to strive for the first place. He frequently made use of his position to upset the plans of others; but, in reality, Abdullahi sought nobody's advice, and discussed state affairs with his brother Yakub only, whose animosity Adlan had incurred, though Yakub was too clever to show it.

As natives go, Adlan's character was good:—he did not care to lend himself to evil designs, and, far from oppressing people, was often the means of lightening the

burdens of others; he was most liberal and well-disposed to those who were submissive to his will; but he was bitterly hostile to those he suspected of finding fault with his actions, or who endeavoured to obtain appointments and positions without his intervention. Like all Sudanese, he was bent on making money by fair means or foul; and as he was head of the Beit el Mal, through whose hands all the taxes passed, this was not a matter of difficulty. He was suspected, and not without reason, of having made an immense fortune, and of this the Khalifa was not ignorant; consequently, during his absence, Yakub and several of his confidants informed the Khalifa that Adlan's influence in the country was almost as great as his own, and that he had frequently spoken disparagingly of his master and his system of government; they even went as far as to say that Adlan had attributed the famine entirely to the Khalifa's treatment of his own tribe.

Adlan, who was somewhat slow in carrying out the Khalifa's instructions in the Gezira, and against whom the Taaisha were clamouring bitterly, was recalled by the Khalifa, who, for the first few days after his arrival, did not show his hand; but when the Taaisha, instigated by Yakub, continued clamouring, the Khalifa summoned him, and accused him in harsh terms of infidelity and abuse of confidence. Furious at this treatment, and trusting to the confidential nature of his position, Adlan, for a moment, forgot that after all he was merely the Khalifa's slave, and retorted in equally sharp terms, "You reproach me now," said he,—"I who have served you all these years; and now I do not fear to speak my mind to you. Through preference for your own tribe,

and your love of evil-doing, you have estranged the hearts of all those who have hitherto been faithful to you. I have ever been mindful of your interests; but as you now listen to my enemies, and to your brother Yakub, who is ill-disposed towards me, I cannot serve you any longer."

The Khalifa, alarmed and shocked by such language, which no one had ever dared before to use in his presence, was furious. If Adlan had not had such power in the country, he would never have dared to speak like this; and if he had not accumulated considerable wealth, he would never have risked giving up so lucrative a position. Abdullahi, however, controlled himself, and replied, "I have taken note of what you have said, and will think it over; leave me now, and I will give you an answer to-morrow." He went out; but ere he had reached the door the Khalifa had made up his mind. After sunset the next day, the two Khalifas, all the Kadis, and Yakub were summoned to a council; and, shortly afterwards, Adlan was called before them. In a few words, similar to those he had used the previous day, the Khalifa spoke to him about his attitude, adding, "You spoke against Yakub, and said that I had estranged myself from the hearts of my partisans; do you not know that my brother Yakub is my eye and my right hand? It is you who have estranged the hearts of my friends from me; and now you dare to do the same with my brother; but the Almighty God is righteous, and you shall not escape your punishment." He then made a sign to the mulazemin, who had been kept in readiness, to seize him and carry him off to prison. Without uttering a word of reproach, with a

firm step, and holding his head high in the air, he submitted to his fate, determined that his enemies should not have the satisfaction of seeing him downhearted or afraid.

The Khalifa at once gave instructions that Adlan's house should be confiscated, and the Beit el Mal property seized. A careful search of the former was ordered; and the employés of the latter were instructed to render immediate and complete accounts. In Adlan's pocket was found a piece of paper inscribed all over with mysterious writing, in which the name of the Khalifa frequently appeared; it had been written with a solution of saffron, which is supposed to possess some secret power; and the unfortunate Adlan was not less superstitious than the majority of the Sudanese. The paper was declared to be sorcery, which is punishable most severely; Adlan was pronounced to be mukhalef (disobedient) in not carrying out his orders, and a traitor, because he had attempted to sow dissension between the Khalifa and his brother Yakub, and, in the endeavour to effect this, had been guilty of the use of sorcery. The verdict was mutilation, or death, and he was allowed to make his choice; he selected the latter.

With his hands tied across his chest, and to the strains of the melancholy ombeÿa, he was led forth to the market-place, accompanied by an immense crowd. Calmly mounting the angareb beneath the scaffold, he himself placed his head in the noose, and, refusing to drink the water offered to him, told the hangman to complete his work; the rope was pulled taut, the angareb was removed, and there Ibrahim swung like a marble

statue, until his soul left his body, the outstretched index finger alone indicating that he died in the true faith of Islam. In spite of the interdiction, wails of sorrow filled the city; but the Khalifa rejoiced that he had rid himself of so dangerous an enemy, and refrained from punishing this disobedience to his orders. He sent his brother Yakub to the funeral, as if to show to the world that Adlan had merely been punished in accordance with the law, and that the well-known animosity between the two had nothing to do with the matter.

His successor as Emin Beit el Mal was a certain Nur Wad Ibrahim whose grandfather was a Takruri. He did not, therefore, belong to the tribes of the Nile valley, and thus had a greater claim on the Khalifa's confidence and consideration.

As regards myself, the Khalifa seemed to grow daily more suspicious. Previous to Ibrahim Adlan's departure for the Gezira, the answer to my letter, which had been sent to my family through Osman Digna, had arrived. It contained only news of a private nature, and expressed the great delight of my family that they had succeeded in at last getting into communication with me. At the same time, they wrote to the Khalifa in submissive words, expressing their gratitude for the kind and honourable treatment which I received at his hands. They also assured him of their great devotion to him, and thanked him for the high honour he had conferred upon them by inviting them to come to Omdurman; but my brother regretted his inability to accept, as he was at that time a secretary in the office of the High Chamberlain of His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, whilst the other brother was a lawyer and lieutenant in

the Artillery Reserve; they were therefore both unable, in virtue of their positions, to undertake so long a journey. My master had called me up, and, on handing me the letters, had ordered me to translate them to him; then, considering for a few moments, he said to me, "It was my intention to induce one of your brothers to come here and see me; and I did what I had never done before,—wrote a letter to them. As they make excuses and refuse to come, and as they now know that you are well, I forbid you to have any more correspondence with them. Further communications would only make you unhappy. Do you understand what I mean?" "Certainly," I replied, "your orders shall be obeyed; and I also think that further communication with my relatives is not necessary." "Where is the Gospel that has been sent to you?" asked he, looking at me fixedly. "I am a Moslem," I answered, for I was now on my guard; "and I have no Gospel in my house. They sent me a translation of the Kuran, the Holy Book, which your secretary saw when the box was opened, and which is still in my possession." "Then bring it to me to-morrow," he said, and signed to me to withdraw.

It was perfectly clear to me that he no longer trusted me; and I knew that after Nejumi's defeat he had several times spoken in this sense to the Kadis. I had already spent almost all the money I had received in gifts amongst my comrades; and now some of these began to murmur, and were disappointed that the sum was so small; and I knew that they were intriguing against me. Who could have induced him to believe that the Kuran which had been sent to me was the

Gospel? The next day, I gave it to him. The translation was by Ullman. He examined it carefully, and then said: "You say that this is the Kuran; it is in the language of unbelievers, and perhaps they have made alterations." "It is a literal translation into my own language," I replied, calmly, "and its object is to make me understand the Holy Book which has come from God, and was made known to mankind by the Prophet, in the Arabic language. If you wish, you can send it to Neufeld, who is in captivity in the prison, and with whom I have no intercourse; and you can ascertain from him if my assertion is correct." "I do not mistrust you, and I believe what you say," he replied, in a somewhat more amiable tone; "but people have spoken to me about it, and you had better destroy the book." When I had told him that I was perfectly willing to do this, he continued, "Also I wish you to return the present your brothers and sisters sent me; I can make no use of it, and it will be a proof to them that I place no value on worldly possessions."

He now had his secretary summoned, and ordered him to write a letter in my name to my family, to the effect that it was not necessary to correspond any more; and, after I had signed it, it was sent, together with the travelling-bag, to the Beit el Mal, to be despatched to Suakin. From that day, I was more careful than ever to do nothing to increase the mistrust which I saw had sprung up in Abdullahi's mind. After Adlan's death, however, he thought it necessary to warn me again, and cautioned me most seriously against becoming mixed up in any sort of conspiracy. Assembling all his mulazemin, he asserted, in the most forcible language, that I

was suspected of being a spy; that he had been told I invariably questioned the camel postmen who arrived, about the situation; that I received visitors in my house at night who were known to be out of favour with him; and that I had gone so far as to inquire in what part of his house his bedroom was situated. "I am afraid," he continued, "that if you do not change your line of conduct, you will follow in the footsteps of my old enemy Adlan."

This was rather a blow to me; but I knew that now, more than ever, I had need of being calm and collected. "Sire!" said I, in a loud voice, "I cannot defend myself against unknown enemies; but I am perfectly innocent of all they have told you. I leave my detractors in the hands of God. For more than six years, in sunshine and rain, I have stood at your door, ever ready to receive and carry out your orders. At your command, I have given up all my old friends, and have no communication with anyone. I have even given up all connection with my relatives, and that without the slightest remonstrance. Such a thing as conspiracy has never even entered my heart. During all these long years, I have never made a complaint. Sire, what have I done? All that I do is not done out of fear of you, but out of love for you; and I cannot do more. Should God still have further trials in store for me, I shall calmly and willingly submit to my fate; but I have full reliance in your sense of justice."

"What have you to say to his words?" he said to the assembled mulazemin, after a moment's silence. All, without exception, admitted that they had never noticed anything in my behaviour which could give rise to such

a suspicion; my enemies also—and I well knew who they were, and who were responsible for getting me into this dangerous position—were obliged to admit this. "I forgive you," said he; "but avoid for the future giving further cause for complaint," and, holding out his hand for me to kiss, he signed to me to withdraw. He must have felt that he had wronged me; for the next day he summoned me, spoke to me kindly, and warned me against my enemies, who, he said, were as a thorn in my flesh. I professed affection and confidence in him; and he then said, in quite a confidential tone, "Do not make enemies, for you know that Mahdia is conducted in accordance with the Moslem law: should you be accused before the Kadi of treason, and two witnesses make good the accusation, you are lost; for I cannot go against the law to save you."

What an existence in a country where one's very life hung on the evidence of two witnesses! Thanking him for his advice, I promised to follow it, and said I would, of course, do all in my power to deserve his confidence. When I returned home at midnight, tired and worn out by this constant strain, my devoted Saadalla informed me, to my great annoyance, that, only a few minutes before, one of the Khalifa's eunuchs had brought a closely-veiled female, who was now in my house.

I ought to have been greatly pleased about this, for it was a proof that the Khalifa had forgiven me; but my first thought was, how to rid myself of this present without creating suspicion. Saadalla and I now entered the house; and, to my horror, I found that underneath the veil was an Egyptian who had been born at Khartum, and who was, consequently, from a Sudanese point of

view, a lady of a comparatively fair complexion. She was seated on the carpet; and, after we had exchanged greetings, she replied to my query as to her nationality with such rapidity of speech that I, who spoke Arabic fairly well, had the greatest difficulty in following the romantic history of her life.

She was the daughter, she said, of an Egyptian officer who, I afterwards learnt, had only been a private soldier, and who had fallen in the fight against the Shilluks, under Yusef Bey. As this had taken place upwards of twenty years before, I could, without any great effort of calculation, estimate fairly accurately that this good lady was well out of her teens; and as she admitted that her first husband had been killed during the capture of Khartum, that her mother was an Abyssinian who had been educated in Khartum, and was still alive, and that she had an enormous number of relatives, I really believe that, had my head not been clean-shaven, my hair would veritably have stood on end. This far-travelled and widely-experienced lady informed me that she had been one of the many hundreds of Abu Anga's wives, and I had now been chosen as the happy successor of this old slave. After his death, she had been captured, with several of her rivals, by the Abyssinians, when King John attacked Gallabat, but had been subsequently liberated by Zeki Tummal; and she knew so many details of all the fights in this neighbourhood, that, had my memory been only capable of retaining them, they would have now been of great interest to my readers. A short time ago, the Khalifa had ordered Abu Anga's remaining widows to be brought to Omdurman, for distribution amongst his followers; she then went on to say that the

Khalifa himself had especially selected her as my wife, and she added, in a subdued tone, that she rejoiced to have fallen into the hands of a fellow-countryman. I explained to her that I was not an Egyptian, but an European. As, however, my skin was somewhat tanned, and the circumstances in which I lived gave her a pretext for claiming me as a compatriot, I was obliged to say that I would provide as far as possible for her maintenance and comfort; and, as the night was well advanced, I bade her follow my servant Saadalla, who would make arrangements for her.

Such were the Khalifa's presents: instead of allocating a small sum of money from the Beit el Mal, by means of which I could have procured for myself a few comforts, he kept on sending me wives, who were not only a source of considerable expense to me, but also a cause of much anxiety and worry, inasmuch as I was continually struggling to free myself from their unwelcome presence. The next morning, the Khalifa laughingly asked me if I had received his present, and if I liked it. With the lesson of two days ago still fresh in my mind, I assured him that I was only too happy to receive this fresh proof of his affection, and that, please God, I should always live in the enjoyment of his favour. When I returned to my house before midday prayer, I found it full of females, who, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Saadalla, and jeering at his wrath, had entered by main force, and now introduced themselves to me as the nearest relatives of Fatma el Beida (The White Fatma), as the Khalifa's present was called.

A decrepid old Abyssinian lady introduced herself as my future mother-in-law; from her loquacity, I should

instantly have recognised her as the mother of Fatma el Beida; and I could not help wondering how so small and fragile a body could contain so noisy and voluble a tongue. She assured me of her pleasure that her daughter had been confided to my care, adding that she was convinced that I would accord to her her rightful position in my household. Here was I, the slave of a tyrant, and obliged to submit to the most wretched of circumstances; and now she talked to me of the position due to her daughter! I assured her that I would of course treat her daughter well; and, apologising that my time was so fully occupied, I fled. Before leaving, however, I ordered Saadalla to entertain them as well as he could, according to the custom of the country, and then to turn them all out, neck and crop, and, if necessary, to call the other servants to his assistance.

A few days afterwards, the Khalifa again inquired about Fatma; and as I knew that he was most anxious that I should lead as quiet and secluded a life as possible, I told him that, for the present, I had no objection to her person; but as her numerous relatives might possibly come in contact with people whose acquaintance neither he, my master, nor I should consider desirable, and that as in my efforts to prevent this I frequently came into collision with both sides, it was naturally my earnest wish to prevent such disturbances. And I then went on to say that, should she not submit to my arrangements, I proposed surrendering Fatma entirely to her relatives; and with this proposition the Khalifa appeared perfectly satisfied.

There was, however, no truth in this statement, for since Saadalla had entertained and turned out his visitors

I had seen no one; fearing to betray my intentions to the Khalifa, I waited some time longer, and then sent Fatma el Beida to her mother, whose whereabouts Saadalla had at length discovered, and I instructed the lady to stay with her mother until I should send for her. A few days afterwards, I sent a few clothes to mother and daughter, and a small sum of money, with a message that she was free, and no longer under any obligations to me. Of course I told the Khalifa what I had done, reiterating that I was most anxious to have nothing to do with people who were strangers to him and to me; and in this he saw an additional proof of my anxiety to obey his orders. About a month later, the mother came to see me, and asked my permission to marry her daughter to one of her relatives. I agreed to this proposition with the greatest alacrity; and I left Fatma el Beida the mother of a happy family in Omdurman.

CHAPTER XIV.

MAHDIST OCCUPATION OF THE SOUTHERN PROVINCES.

The Mahdist Expedition to Equatoria.—The Fate of the Remnant of Emin's Garrison.—The Campaign against the Shilluks.—Tokar re-captured.—Death of Osman Wad Adam.—Dissensions in Dongola.—The Fall of Khaled.

KARAMALLA, from whom Osman Wad Adam had taken away all his Bazingers and female slaves, and who was now in a state of poverty in Omdurman, had, whilst Emir of the Bahr el Ghazal Province, advanced to the vicinity of the White Nile, and had worried Emin Pasha. Fortunately for the latter, Karamalla had been recalled; and the Bahr el Ghazal Province having been abandoned, no news had been received from Equatoria for a long time, and those merchants who were engaged in the grain trade brought little information from any of the countries south of Fashoda. The Khalifa, who was always turning over in his mind how he could increase his revenue, had heard of the richness of these countries in ivory and slaves, and, in consequence, had decided to organise an expedition to attack and take possession of them; but, as the undertaking was a risky one and success doubtful, he hesitated to involve in it his relatives or his tribe; he therefore nominated Omar Saleh, who had been educated amongst the Taaisha tribe, as chief of the expedition, which was composed for the most part.

of tribes of the Nile valley,—Jaalin and Danagla. Three steamers were now manned, as well as eight sailing-vessels filled with cargo, consisting principally of Manchester goods, beads, etc.; and Omar Saleh was given a force of some rifles and five hundred spearmen. The Khalifa sent letters to Emin Pasha, including one which I was obliged to sign, in which I called upon him to surrender; George Stambuli, who had formerly been Emin Pasha's private agent in Khartum, was also obliged to write a letter. At this time, the Shilluks were in considerable force; and as they did not owe allegiance to the Khalifa, Omar Saleh was instructed to pass by Fashoda as quickly as possible, and only to defend himself in case of attack. The expedition quitted Omdurman in July, 1890, passed Fashoda without difficulty; and after that Omar had no further opportunity of reporting on his position. It was not till a year had elapsed, and the Khalifa was beginning to get uneasy, and was considering how he could procure information, that a steamer arrived with some ivory and a quantity of slaves, the captain of which gave a full account of the progress and position of the expedition. The Egyptian garrison of Reggaf had surrendered, and some of the officers of that place had been sent to Duffilé, with orders to seize Emin Pasha, whose soldiers had mutinied, and hand him over to Omar Saleh. After the departure of the party from Reggaf, a rumour had been circulated amongst the Mahdists that they had been deceived by the officers, and that it was the intention of the latter, on their arrival at Duffilé, to join with the garrison of that place and attack Omar Saleh; he therefore seized the officers and men who had remained behind, threw

them into chains, and distributed their property and slaves amongst his followers. The officers who had gone to Duffilé had really intended to capture Emin, who had in the meantime left with Stanley; and, hearing of what had happened to their wives and property, they now collected the soldiers who, on Emin's departure had created a sort of military republic, and with them marched towards Reggaf. The Mahdists, getting information of this, met them on the road; and a fight ensued, in which Omar Saleh was victorious. The officers were killed; but most of the men succeeded in beating a retreat towards Duffilé followed by the Mahdists, who attacked the position, but were driven off and forced to retire. In spite of this victory, great dissensions prevailed amongst the men; and, eventually, they dispersed in bands throughout the province, in order to gain their own livelihood. The Khalifa, rejoicing at Omar Saleh's success, and his cupidity excited by the exaggerated accounts of Wad Badai, who had arrived on the steamer, now gave instructions for another expedition to be equipped, with which he despatched Hassib Wad Ahmed and Elias Wad Kanuna, and took advantage of the occasion to rid himself of many characters which were obnoxious to him. From that date, Reggaf became a colony for the deportation of convicts, and of persons whose presence in Omdurman was considered dangerous to the state. Several persons who had been accused of theft, and incarcerated in the Saier, where handed over to Wad Kanuna, who, at the same time, had all persons suspected of leading an immoral life seized, thrown into chains, and sent up to Reggaf; the opportunity was made the most of by several of the Emirs and other influential

people to rid themselves of any persons whom they thought dangerous or disagreeable to them. The two chiefs also took advantage of the occasion to visit all the villages on the river bank between Omdurman and Kawa, and ruthlessly seize the people, under the pretext that they belonged to this category, and had been sentenced by the Khalifa to transportation; they could only regain their freedom by the payment of a considerable sum of money to the two Emirs, who continued their depredations until they reached the Shilluk and Dinka country, the inhabitants of which they feared too much to attempt such outrages on them.

From merchants who had gone to Fashoda in the years 1889 and 1890 to obtain grain, we had heard a good deal about the people who lived in these countries. The districts in close proximity to the river were mostly inhabited by the Shillucks and Dinkas, who, untrammelled by the despotic tyranny of the Khalifa lived a quiet and undisturbed life in the midst of their families. They were ruled over by a descendant of the Mek (King) of the old Shilluk royal family, who had certain restrictive rights over his subjects, and, with his own interest always to the fore, permitted commercial relations with the Mahdists, avoiding at the same time any actual allegiance to the Khalifa, to whom he did not pay tribute. Wad Badai, who had had sufficient opportunities of seeing the wealth of the country between Fashoda and Reggaf, now gave it as his opinion that the Khalifa would considerably profit by its acquisition. At this time, Zeki Tummal was at Gallabat with his army, which, owing to famine, had considerably decreased in numbers, though he had done his best to

maintain it at the expense of the local population; he had, moreover, made constant raids on the Amhara country. But now the condition of the district had become so poor that he had great difficulties in finding sufficient supplies for his men, with whom he was unusually strict, punishing them most rigorously for the most trivial offences; and on this account he was not only unpopular amongst them, but also amongst his Emirs. He now received instructions from the Khalifa to proceed to the Shilluk country; and, marching to Kawa, where he embarked, he went direct to Fashoda. The King of the Shilluks, being under the impression that Zeki's steamers were on their way to Reggaf, was much surprised when the Emir suddenly landed; the Mek fled, was pursued, captured, and, having refused to disclose the hiding-place of the money he had received in exchange for the grain, was promptly executed. The Shilluks, however, who are the finest and bravest of the Sudanese Black tribes, collected both north and south of Fashoda, and defended their liberty and their homes with magnificent courage and resolution; but Zeki's men, used to constant fighting, and armed with Remington rifles, were almost invariably victorious. It was not, however, until after many bloody fights, in which the Shilluks, armed only with their lances, frequently broke the squares and inflicted considerable loss on the soldiers, that they had at last to admit they were beaten. They dispersed, with their families, throughout the country, but were pursued in all directions by Zeki, who captured large numbers of them. The men he invariably put to the sword; but the women, young girls, and children were embarked

on the steamers, and despatched to Omdurman. Here the Khalifa ordered the young boys to be taken charge of by his mulazemin, by whom they were to be brought up, whilst most of the girls he kept for himself, or distributed amongst his followers and special adherents. The remainder were sent to the Beit el Mal, where they were publicly sold; but thousands of these poor creatures succumbed to fatigue, want, and the change of climate. Unused to life in this squalid city, these wild Blacks were huddled together in wretched quarters, and eventually found homes amongst the poorest class of the population. It was no uncommon occurrence for a girl to be sold as a slave at the rate of from eight to twenty dollars (Omdurman currency).

When Zeki left Gallabat, the Emir Ahmed Wad Ali took his place, and his brother Hamed Wad Ali was nominated Emir of Kassala. Avaricious to a degree, he mercilessly robbed the people of their property and cattle, with the result that the eastern Arab tribes, such as the Hadendoa, Halenga, Beni Amer, etc., who had really captured Kassala for the Mahdi, now revolted, and, wandering eastwards in the direction of Massawa, placed themselves under the protection of the Italians. Thus it was that this once thickly populated country became almost denuded of inhabitants. Amongst others, the once powerful Shukria tribe, which had suffered terribly during the famine year, was now almost extinct; whilst the fertile district of Kassala was almost completely deserted, and the garrison there had the greatest difficulty in maintaining itself.

The Khalifa, alarmed at the progress of the Italians from Massawa, now looked upon Kassala as the main-

stay of his authority in these districts. He was furious with his cousin, Hamed Wad Ali, whom he accused of having ruined the country, and recalled him to Omdurman, where he was ordered to attend prayers in the mosque five times daily; and he replaced him at Kassala by Abu Girga, who had hitherto been with Osman Digna.

Osman Digna, who had been made responsible for the government of the Eastern Sudan, had been successful in subjugating most of the Arab tribes; and, through them, he had for several years been a menace to Suakin. He had had several engagements with the Government troops; and, on one occasion, Sir Herbert Kitchener, the present Sirdar of the Egyption Army, had been severely wounded whilst making an attack on his camp at Handub. Eventually, the Government sent an expedition which drove him out of the position he had taken up to besiege Suakin; and he now made his headquarters at Tokar, where he remained for some years, making constant incursions in the vicinity of Suakin, and harrying the friendly tribes of which the Amarar was the principal; but, tired of this constant fighting, and irritated by Osman's undue severity, the local tribes began to desert the cause, and not a few of them became actually hostile to the Khalifa's authority. Informed of this state of things Abdullahi, more anxious to defend his newly acquired realm than to occupy himself in propagating the Mahdist doctrine, instructed Osman Digna not to go too far, and sent Mohammed Wad Khaled to him with this message. The latter, after the confiscation of his property at Bara, had been kept for more than a year in chains in Kordofan; he

had then been brought to Omdurman, had received the Khalifa's pardon, and had received back a small portion of his property. For years, he had said his prayers daily in the mosque under the Khalifa's eye, and had apparently broken off all relations with his relatives, whom he accused of unfairness and ingratitude; but, as usual, his astuteness had not failed him; he was well aware of the Khalifa's hostility to all the Mahdi's relatives, and that was the reason he so studiously avoided all contact with them; hence his nomination as the Kalifa's personal representative with Osman Digna. In this mission he was most successful; and, having completed it, he was instructed to proceed to Abu Hamed, and report on the general condition of the Ababda tribes, who were subject to the Egyptian Government, but who were at the same time in close relationship with the Mahdist tribes of the Berber Province. Khaled's mission, however, did not have any lasting effect on Osman Digna; for, a few weeks after his departure, the Egyptian troops, under Holled Smith Pasha, attacked Tokar, and utterly routed Osman, who fled to the Atbara. The Khalifa, who had been informed by Osman that he was about to be attacked, awaited the result with the greatest anxiety; but he openly declared to his followers that he had not the slightest doubt that victory was assured; when, therefore, the news came of Osman's utter defeat and flight, he was greatly upset. Councils of war were at once held, for it was feared the Government troops would advance towards Kassala and Berber, both of which places were only weakly held; consequently, instructions were issued to the commanders of these places that, should the troops advance,

they should fall back on Metemmeh, where it was his intention to make a fortified camp. Great, however, was his relief when he received news that the Government had contented itself with the re-capture of Tokar. The loss of this district was undoubtedly a very heavy blow to him, and left open to the tribes friendly to the Government the roads leading to both Kassala and Berber. A few months later, Osman Digna, who had taken up a position on the high ground south of Berber, with the remnant of his force, suffered greatly from want of food, and was obliged to disperse his men over the country; he therefore received orders to proceed to Berber with his Emirs, and, having obtained new clothing, he and the newly nominated Emir of Berber, Zeki Osman, were summoned to Omdurman. Here he was received in a friendly manner by the Khalifa, who convinced of his fidelity and trustworthiness, consoled him about his defeat, and, after treating him honourably for a few weeks, sent him back with some horses, camels, and women to the Atbara, where he was instructed to make a camp and agricultural settlement, and collect his scattered forces.

At this time, only Eastern Darfur remained subject to Osman Wad Adam. The country had been almost depopulated by famine, and this Emir now decided to advance against Dar Tama and Massalit; but, on the frontier, he encountered such severe opposition that he began to think the undertaking too dangerous. He was attacked in his zariba by the natives, who, armed only with small spears, forced their way in; and he had to thank his Remington rifles and the Sheikhs who were with him, for a dearly earned victory; had he been at-

tacked on the line of march, he would almost certainly have been annihilated. His heavy losses considerably delayed his march; and, ere he could obtain reinforcements, a severe epidemic of typhoid fever broke out amongst his men, and he was forced to retire; falling ill himself on the march, he died two days after his arrival at Fasher. His loss was a great blow to the Khalifa, who looked on his young cousin (he was barely twenty years of age) as a courageous leader who paid careful attention to the wants of his men, and had done much to increase the strength and number of the Mahdist forces; he invariably sent to the Khalifa the fair share of the booty, and disinterestedly divided the remainder amongst his people, keeping only for himself what sufficed for his immediate wants. He was a magnificent rider, was most popular with everyone, and avoided leading an effeminate and enervating existence; for long after his death he was looked upon as a fine example of a bold and courageous Arab. He was succeeded in the command of Darfur by another of the Khalifa's youthful relatives, Mahmud Wad Ahmed, who was a great contrast to his predecessor: he thought only of enriching himself; his sole pleasure consisted in leading a life of debauchery with women of evil repute, dancers, and singers, and he took special delight in all their unseemly ways. A mutiny soon broke out amongst his men, which was suppressed with the utmost severity, and resulted in a considerable weakening of his forces.

Yunes, who, since his despatch to Dongola, had always been considered Nejumi's superior, now attached to his councils Arabi Wad Dafalla and Mussaid; but, as each one was bent entirely on enriching himself as

rapidly as possible, differences soon broke out, for the country was quite unable to sustain the strain of over-burdened taxation. Mussaid and Arabi complained to the Khalifa that Yunes allowed his Emirs to govern the country entirely according to their own ideas, with the result that prices were continually rising; and, in consequence of this report, he was recalled from Dongola.

This province being adjacent to the Egyptian frontier, large numbers of the inhabitants had emigrated to Egypt; and, as the Egyptian garrison at Wadi Halfa was being constantly reinforced, the Khalifa, dreading an attack, insisted on a more lenient treatment of the people. He therefore appointed Khaled as Yunes's successor, as he was convinced that his character and capabilities exactly suited him for this post, and instructed him that he should tax the people in accordance with the number of the sakias (water-wheels) and date-palms; but not being entirely without suspicion of Khaled's behaviour, he ordered a detachment of his own men, armed with rifles, to be placed under Arabi Wad Dafalla, whilst the spearmen of his own tribe were made over to Mussaid.

The natural outcome of these arrangements was renewed dissension. Khaled, anxious to increase the revenue of the country without augmenting taxation, began filling up vacant posts with men of his own choice, whilst Arabi and Mussaid did their utmost to nominate their own relatives and friends; failing to arrange matters with Khaled, they now began to make the most exorbitant demands, with which he could not possibly comply, and, from dissensions, they came to insults, and very nearly to blows, the two parties being

actually drawn up facing each other with arms in their hands. Khaled's party was composed principally of inhabitants of the Nile valley,—Jaalin and Danagla,—whilst that of Arabi and Mussaid was composed of Jehadia and western Arabs. Message after message was despatched to the Khalifa by both sides, whilst actual conflict was prevented by intermediaries and peacefully disposed persons. Abdullahi immediately sent Yunes to take the place of Arabi and Mussaid, who were recalled; and, immediately after they had arrived, he sent instructions to Khaled to appear before him in Omdurman, to be present, he said, at the punishment of Arabi and Mussaid; but no sooner had he reached the capital than he was arraigned in court with his antagonists. The judges consisted of the Khalifa as President, and a number of Kadis and devoted Emirs as members; Khaled was accused of having spoken disparagingly of his master and relatives, by saying that they had been the cause of the ruin of the country. The Khalifa's brother Yakub was as usual at the bottom of this intrigue, and there is no doubt the Khalifa himself regretted having given Khaled so influential a position; he therefore gladly seized this opportunity of getting rid of him. During the proceedings a letter arrived from Yunes (who had beforehand received Yakub's private instructions) to the effect that whilst the parties were mediating, Khaled had clandestinely concealed six boxes of ammunition, which he intended to send to his relatives in Omdurman. Before the arraignment, the Khalifa had privately arranged the verdict, and of course no one dared to take the part of the accused; he was found guilty, sentenced to imprisonment for an

indefinite period, and was hurried off to the Saier, where he was kept in solitary confinement. Curiously enough, an explanation of the Khalifa's action appeared in an Arabic newspaper published in Cairo, in which an extract from the Italian paper "La Riforma" had been published to the effect that Khaled had been in communication with the Egyptian Government for the surrender of the province with which he had been entrusted. In consequence of this, the Khalifa again assembled the judges, showed them the newspaper as a proof of Khaled's treachery; and he was at once condemned to be executed. The Khalifa, however, declared that he was most anxious not to cause the death of one of the Mahdi's relatives and a descendant of the Prophet, he therefore commuted the sentence to imprisonment for life. His magnanimity on this occasion was of course praised on all sides, whilst he himself rejoiced that he had for ever ridden himself of the only one of the Mahdi's relatives of whose knowledge and astuteness he was justly in considerable awe. He now used Khaled's treachery as a handle by which to irritate the Ashraf in general; and lost no opportuuity of doing all he could to weaken their cause, and reduce them to a position of impotence, with the result that an insurrection eventually broke out in Omdurman, which ended in the complete success of the plans which Abdullahi had long since prepared.

CHAPTER XV.

DISSENSION AND DISCORD.

The Revolt of the Ashraf.—Flight of Father Ohrwalder and the two Sisters.—The Khalifa revenges himself on the Ashraf.—The Seizure and Execution of the Mahdi's Uncles.—Zeki Tummal's Return to Omdurman laden with Booty.—Khalifa Sherif arrested.—"When there is no Fire there is no Smoke."—I change my Quarters.—Sad News from Austria.—The Khalifa falls ill.—The Story of the Bird-messenger.—The Fall of Zeki Tummal.—The Battle of Agordat.—The Capture of Kassala.—The Fate of Kadi Ahmed.—The Congo Free State in Equatoria and Bahr el Ghazal.—I refuse to marry the Khalifa's Cousin.

THE Khalifa Mohammed Sherif, in conjunction with two of the Mahdi's sons, who were scarcely twenty years of age, and many of his relatives, now agreed amongst themselves to shake off the hated yoke of Khalifa Abdullahi, and seize the reins of government. They secretly elaborated their plans in Omdurman, and gradually took into their confidence several of their friends and fellow-tribesmen. They also despatched letters to the Danagla living in the Gezira, whom they invited to come to Omdurman and join them; but one of the Jaalin Emirs betrayed them. He had been bound over by an oath to tell only his brother or best friends; and he at once informed the Khalifa, saying that he considered him his best friend. Apprised of the conspiracy, Abdullahi at once made counter arrangements;

but the Ashraf, warned by their spies of the Khalifa's secret orders and doings, realised that their plot had been discovered, and immediately collected in that part of the town just north of the Khalifa's house, prepared for the fray. All the Ashraf and Danagla in Omdurman assembled in the houses in the vicinity of the Mahdi's tomb; and the sailors and most of the boats' crews joined them, saying that they were ready to fight and conquer for the sake of the religion which the Khalifa had abused. The arms which had been secretly hidden were now brought out and distributed. They numbered scarcely a hundred Remington rifles, a small quantity of ammunition, and a few elephant guns. Ahmed Wad Suleiman behaved like one demented. He declared that he had seen the Prophet and the Mahdi, who assured him of the victory of his party; and he urged forward the commencement of hostilities. Even the Mahdi's widows, who, after his death, had been kept strictly locked up in their houses by the Khalifa, were not allowed to see anyone, and were given scarcely sufficient food to keep them alive, longed for the conflict, hoping that their position would be ameliorated. Indeed the Um el Muminin (The Mother of the Believers), the Mahdi's principal widow, girded a sword round her waist, with the intention of taking a part in this Holy War. Whilst all this was going on at night, and within scarcely a hundred yards of the Khalifa's house, he himself was quietly taking his precautions.

It was on a Monday evening, after prayers, that the Khalifa summoned his special mulazemin, and, in a few words, informed us of the intentions of the Ashraf. He

instructed us to arm ourselves as best we could, and on no account to quit our posts in front of the gate. Ammunition was served out to the Black mulazemin Jehadia, and they were ordered to take up positions in the streets leading to the houses of the rebels, and cut off any reinforcements which might attempt to join them. Upwards of a thousand rifles were distributed amongst the Taaisha Arabs, who were posted in the open space between the Mahdi's tomb and the Khalifa's house, and also along the enclosure of the latter. The Black troops, under the command of Ahmed Fedil, took up a position in the middle of the mosque, and there awaited further orders; and here also were posted the infantry spearmen and cavalry under the command of Yakub. Khalifa Ali, whose people were suspected of sympathising with the rebels, was ordered to occupy the northern portion of the city, and cut off all communication in that direction.

When the sun arose, the mutineers were completely surrounded; and they had now to choose between fighting and surrendering. Before, however, any blows were exchanged, the Khalifa despatched his Kadi, accompanied by Sayed Mekki, to Khalifa Sherif and the Mahdi's sons, reminding them of their late father's proclamation, and of the words he had spoken before his death. At the same time, he instructed the Kadi to inquire into their grievances, which he promised to rectify, if it was possible for him to do so. The curt answer to the Khalifa was that they preferred to fight. Abdullahi had given strict injunctions to all his Emirs to abstain, as far as possible, from blows, and only to defend themselves in the event of a sudden attack. He

was most anxious to quell the insurrection by conciliatory measures, as he fully realised that, if a fight ensued in which there was little doubt he would be victorious, Omdurman would almost certainly be sacked and ruined. He was well aware that the western Arab tribes would gladly seize the occasion to satisfy their ruling passion for murder and plunder; their one desire would be to obtain all the loot they could, and to this end to spare neither friend nor foe, with the result that, in all probability, they would fight amongst themselves, and then go off to their own country, which they had quitted with considerable reluctance. Once more he sent the Kadi to the insurgents, who returned with a similar reply.

Personally, I longed for the fight, for I had only my life to lose, and that was in daily peril. I had before me the example of Ibrahim Adlan; and I knew that Abdullahi had no regard for the lives of his best and truest friends. Internal fighting must result in the weakening of my enemies, and that alone would have been a source of satisfaction to me; moreover, in the confusion which must arise, I might find an occasion to regain my liberty, and possibly I might be able to exercise some influence over the former Government troops, who I knew were much dissatisfied with their present treatment. Under such abnormal circumstances, it was impossible to frame any distinct plan of action. My desire was that a fight should take place, and that I should make as much capital out of it as I could for my own personal benefit.

Some of the most excited of the mutineers now began firing, and some of those on our side, contrary to

orders, replied; but it was by no means a fight,—merely a few stray shots. The insurgents did not seem to know what they wanted; their party was undecided, their weapons were bad and out of repair, and so also was the courage of the Ashraf and their followers. After a short time, the firing ceased, and on our side the total loss was five killed. Again the Khalifa sent out a proclamation, which was borne this time by Khalifa Ali Wad Helu, and to this summons the reply was more favourable; they wished to know, they said, the conditions of reconciliation; and they were then told to name their proposals. The negotiations continued all that day and far into the night. They began again the following day, and, to my great regret, a clear understanding was arrived at, and was agreed to by the Khalifa under a solemn oath: he promised complete forgiveness to all who had taken part in the insurrection, to give to Khalifa Mohammed Sherif a position worthy of his dignity, and a seat in Council, to allow him to again take possession of the standards which, after Nejumi's death, had been laid aside, and to collect volunteers under them, and promised pecuniary support from the Beit el Mal to the Mahdi's relatives, in accordance with Sherif's proposals. In return for these concessions, the insurgents agreed to give up all their arms, and submit unconditionally to the Khalifa's orders. The agreement was now ratified, and the terms of peace concluded by the delegates on both sides; but somehow no one seemed in any hurry to execute them. On the following Friday morning, the leaders of the insurgents came themselves before the Khalifa, and obtained a renewal of the promises he had made, in return for

which they gave fresh attestations of loyalty; and, on the same afternoon, Khalifa Sherif and the Mahdi's sons approached Abdullahi. Peace was now fully concluded, and the cavalry and infantry, which had been with us day and night since the disturbances began, were permitted to leave the mosque and return to their quarters; but, as the arms had not yet been handed over, the jehadia and mulazemin were ordered to remain at their posts.

On Sunday afternoon, I had sent one of my servants to the Missionary Father, Joseph Ohrwalder, to inquire after him, and he had found his door closed; I had thoughtlessly made inquiries about him of his neighbours, the Greeks and some of the former merchants who, as my servant told me, had made a most careful search for him, but had been unable to trace him or the Missionary Sisters who had been with him. It at once flashed through my mind that possibly, during the disturbances, he might have found some trusty persons who had undertaken to effect his escape; and so it eventually transpired. Before evening prayer, the Emir of the Muslemania (Europeans who had been forcibly made to adopt Mohammedanism), and the Syrian George Stambuli anxiously came and asked to be taken before the Khalifa, as they had something of considerable importance to tell him. The Khalifa, fully occupied with matters which he considered of great importance, ordered them to wait at the mosque; and, after night prayers, he asked them what they wanted. With trembling voices, they informed him that Yusef el Gasis (Joseph the Priest) was missing since yesterday, also the women who were with him. Very much annoyed, the Khalifa

at once summoned Nur el Gereifawi, the Emin Beit el Mal, and Mohammed Wahbi, the Prefect of the Police, and commanded them to do all in their power to overtake the fugitives and bring them back to Omdurman, dead or alive. It was fortunate for the poor Greeks that the Khalifa was so much occupied with other matters or he would—as Ohrwalder had lived amongst them—have arrested many and confiscated their property. Luckily, however, on the day of the outbreak, all the camels had been sent into the districts in order to bring in the troops; and Gareifawi and Wahbi could only procure three camels for the pursuit of Ohrwalder, who knew that the success of his flight depended on its rapidity. From the depth of my heart I hoped he might succeed. He had suffered a great deal, and had borne it with Christian fortitude and patience. I now felt completely deserted; he was the only man with whom I was intellectually on a par, and with whom I could—though very rarely—talk a few words in my mother tongue.

The following day, I was summoned before the Khalifa, who angrily reproached me for Ohrwalder's flight. "He is one of your own race, and is in communication with you; why did you not draw my attention to its possibility, so that I might have taken precautions? I am positive you knew of his intention to escape," said he. "Sire, pardon me!" said I; "how could I know of his intention to escape, and how could I tell you that he had done so? Since the outbreak of the revolt attempted by your God-forsaken enemies, and which, thanks to the Almighty, you have now defeated by your wisdom, I have not moved day or night from

my post. Had I known that he was a traitor, I should have at once told you of it." To this he angrily replied, "No doubt your Consul arranged for him to be taken away from here."

Amongst the last letters which I had received, was one written in Arabic from the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General, Von Rosty, to the Khalifa, in which he thanked him for the kind treatment of the members of the former Catholic Mission, and, at the same time, asked his permission to send them a messenger, for whom he begged a free pass, as they were under Austrian protection, and as His Majesty the Emperor had a special regard for them. The Khalifa had shown me the letter, which he had left unanswered; but from that day he had looked upon the members of the Mission as my compatriots, and was now convinced that they had been assisted to escape by the aid of the Consul-General. I now remarked to the Khalifa that possibly merchants belonging to the frontier tribes, and who often came to Omdurman, might have taken advantage of the disturbances in order to help Ohrwalder and the Sisters to escape, so as to obtain some pecuniary reward for themselves. Abdullahi, who was still much pre-occupied with the revolt, came round to my opinion; and, after admonishing me to remain perfectly loyal, he dismissed me.

In spite of the reluctance of the Ashraf to surrender their arms, they were gradually obliged to give them all up; and, having achieved this much, the Khalifa now set to work to mature his scheme of revenge. Twenty days perhaps had passed since the beginning of the outbreak, but we were still kept in constant readiness,

watching day and night over our master. He now summoned the two Khalifas, the Kadis, and the chiefs of the Ashraf and Danagla to a meeting. He reproached the latter severely, saying, that in spite of his previous pardon, they had shown great reluctance in obeying his orders, they seldom attended prayers, and were scarcely ever present at the Friday morning parades; he also had the Mahdi's proclamation read out to them. Then, true to the system adopted by his predecessor, of acting entirely in accordance with prophetic inspiration, he announced to the meeting that the Prophet had appeared to him, and had commanded him to mete out punishment to the disobedient, whom he had mentioned by name. Thirteen persons in all were included in this category: Ahmed Wad Suleiman, whom he detested, headed the list; then followed Shenudi, one of the Khalifa's secretaries, a Dongolawi who was under suspicion of sympathising with the rebels and giving them information of the Khalifa's plans. One by one, as each name was called, the unfortunate wretches had their hands tied behind their backs, were carried off to the prison, and thrown into chains; a few days later, the Khalifa sent them by boat, under a strong escort, to Fashoda, where Zeki Tummal had them closely confined for eight days in a zariba with scarcely any food or water, giving them only just sufficient to keep them alive; then, in accordance with the secret instructions he had received, he had them beaten to death with freshly cut sticks from thorny trees. The execution took place in front of the whole army, and, before this cruel operation began, their clothing was ruthlessly torn from their emaciated bodies.

Immediately the insurrection was over, the Khalifa despatched two of his relatives, Ibrahim Wad Melek and Saleh Hamedo,—the former to the Blue and the latter to the White Nile,—to arrest all the followers and relatives of the Ashraf, who, being absent, were not included in the general amnesty. In compliance with these orders, upwards of a thousand men were sent in shebas to Omdurman, where they were accused by the Khalifa of having taken part in the conspiracy. For many days, they were kept in close confinement, huddled together in the prison-yard, and in hourly dread of execution; but at length the Khalifa pardoned them, on condition that they should share all they possessed with him; and of course the poor wretches had to agree to these conditions. Orders were issued to carry out the distribution in accordance with the curious arithmetical rules instituted by the Khalifa, who, of course, received the lion's share; on their return to their villages, they found themselves divested of almost everything they possessed. Those who had been well off were left with a mere pittance; and the poorer members had nothing, whilst they found their daughters had been dishonoured, and their wives abused. Deprived of all their arms, they had to submit to the inevitable; but in their hearts they longed for some opportunity of revenge. The Khalifa, after having taken all he required of their property for himself and his brother, distributed the remainder amongst the western Arabs, and of these, the Jubarat section, to which he belonged, was given the largest share. This roused the discontent of the other tribes, to whom the Taaisha had for some considerable time been a constant source of annoyance; not only

were they given the preference in almost every case; but they were overbearingly insolent, and whenever complaints were made to the Khalifa or Yakub, the petitioners were invariably sharply rebuked. During all these disturbances, the natives in the provinces and the various garrisons had remained quiet; and their commanders had received secret instructions to gradually disarm the Danagla, of whose disloyalty there was no longer any doubt.

Abdullahi now turned his attention to the Mahdi's two uncles, Mohammed Abdel Kerim and Abdel Kader Wad Sati Ali. He affirmed he had received information that they were indignant about his actions, and had been guilty of instigating others against him; they utterly denied the charge, but were sentenced by Kadi Ali to imprisonment. The Khalifa ordered them to be put in chains, and sent on to Zeki Tummal, who, as usual, was provided with secret instructions.

Zeki's forces had dispersed all the Shilluk gatherings throughout the country, and destroyed their villages; but, an epidemic of typhus having broken out amongst the men, the Khalifa ordered him to quit Fashoda and come with his entire army to Omdurman, but, before doing so, to raid the Dinka tribe, who had already made their submission without fighting, seize their cattle and enslave their wives and children. These unsuspecting Blacks were summoned together under the pretext of a great feast; and, when all had assembled, they were massacred almost to a man, and their wives, children, and cattle carried off. Whilst on this expedition he met, near Gebel Ahmed Agha, the boat conveying the Mahdi's uncles; and, having perused the letters from

Omdurman, he ordered the prisoners to be landed after sunset. The wretched captives, knowing the fate that was in store for them, besought pardon, but were only jeered at by Zeki Tummal; they were taken inland, and their heads were split open with the small axes which are used in the Sudan for lopping off branches of trees.

Zeki Tummal now returned to Omdurman laden with booty; he brought with him thousands of female slaves, and immense herds of cattle, the sale of which brought in a large sum of ready money. Most of Zeki's Emirs indignantly complained of his tyranny, and even asserted to the Khalifa that, if he could obtain sufficient followers, he would not hesitate to make himself independent; but the latter, by making rich presents of female slaves, money, and cattle to the Khalifa and his brother, succeeded in remaining in their good graces.

Whilst Zeki Tummal was in Omdurman, the Khalifa carried out a series of manœuvres between his forces and those quartered in Omdurman, and personally took the command; but as he had absolutely no idea of military science; and as the thirty thousand troops of whom he disposed were entirely without discipline, the manœuvres resulted in the most hopeless confusion and disorder; and the blame for this invariably fell on my devoted head, for the Khalifa employed me as a sort of aide-de-camp, and when he became inextricably muddled up he hurled abuse at me, and said I had purposely perverted his orders to make mischief. Of course, I did not dare remonstrate with him, and quietly continued to carry out his orders. At length he declared the exercises over, ordered Zeki Tummal off to Gallabat,

and, as was usually the case, commended me for my services, and presented me with two Black young ladies as a proof of his good-will.

Meanwhile, Khalifa Sherif had heard of the murder of his two relatives, and openly protested against this tyrannical proceeding; thus giving Abdullahi an opportunity of taking the revenge for which he had so patiently waited. He declared him to be guilty of disobedience to the instructions which the Mahdi had so strictly enforced, and of inattention to the Divine inspiration of the Prophet. He therefore ordered Khalifa Ali and the Kadis to take him to task for the manner in which he had expressed himself, and to point out to him that the entirely false impression he had of his own rights as Khalifa had brought about the death of his own relatives and followers. Promptly assembling all the Kadis and principal Emirs, they decided that Khalifa Sherif should be immediately arrested; on the following day, the mulazemin being formed up in square on the open space between Abdullahi's house and the Mahdi's tomb, they went in a body to him, informed him that he was to be arrested, counselled submission, and advised him to come with them of his own free-will. Too late, he now realised what he had brought upon himself by his careless and ill-considered talking. Going outside, he was received by the mulazemin under the command of Arabi Dafalla; when he asked for his shoes, they were refused him; and, on coming out of the mosque, he was driven and pushed along at such a rate that he twice fell to the ground from pure exhaustion, arriving at length at the Saier in a deplorable condition. Here six irons were hammered on to his legs, so that

he could scarcely move; and a small straw hut was allotted to him as his abode. Cut off from all intercourse with his fellow-creatures, and with only the bare ground to lie upon, he had ample time to realise that the sacred promises given by a Khalifa were of no avail when it was a question of upholding his authority, or satisfying his thirst for vengeance. The Mahdi's two young sons were sent to their grandfather, Ahmed Sharfi, who was ordered to keep them closely locked up in his house, and allow no one to see them. This Ahmed was an old man, and had made an immense fortune by robbery; fearing to lose it, he was as submissive as a slave to the Khalifa, and had thus to some extent gained his affection.

Soon after this occurrence, I passed through a period of considerable excitement. Yunes had sent on a man from Dongola to the Khalifa; he had come from Cairo, and was charged with important information from the Government. He was received personally by the Khalifa in the presence of all the Kadis. I had a foreboding that the man's arrival was somehow connected with me, and I endeavoured to discover from one of the Kadis, who was a friend of mine, what had happened; he hurriedly told me that I had nothing to fear, and advised me not to show the slightest interest in the matter, lest I might be suspected. After prayers, the Kadis and the messenger were again summoned before the Khalifa, and, to my great relief, I saw the man soon afterwards tied hand and foot and carried off to prison. My comrades were quarrelling amongst themselves as to the cause of the man's imprisonment; but, mindful of the advice I had received, I was careful to abstain from any

interference. The following day, when I had gone to my house for a short time, I was suddenly summoned by the Khalifa, and found several of the Kadis with him. In compliance with his orders, I seated myself down with them, and he began to speak. Turning to the assembly, he informed them that he had continually urged me to be loyal, that he cared for me as a father cared for his son, and that he had steadily refused to believe the numerous accusations which were, from time to time, brought up against me; and then, turning to me, he completed his speech with the Arabic proverb, "Where there is no fire, there is no smoke," adding, "but with you there is a great deal of smoke. The messenger said yesterday that you are a Government spy, and that your monthly salary is paid to your representative in Cairo, who forwards it to you here. He affirms that he has seen your signature in the Government office in Egypt, and that you assisted Yusef el Gasis to escape; he adds, moreover, that you are pledged to the English, in the event of an attack on Omdurman, to seize the powder and ammunition stores, which they know are situated opposite to your house. We have at once had the man imprisoned, for he formerly escaped from here; what have you to say in your defence?"

"Sire!" I replied, "God is merciful, and you are just. I am no spy: I have never had any communication with the Government; and it is absolutely untrue that I receive a salary which is forwarded to me here. My brothers, your mulazemin, who go in and out of my house, know that I am often in the greatest want, and it is only my deep respect for you which prevents me

from complaining; but if he states that he has seen my signature, then he is guilty of a second lie, for I am certain that he is quite unable to read any European language. I will, if you wish, write on a paper several names, and amongst them my own; if he can discover it, then it will be a proof that he can read our language; but that will not necessarily prove that I am a spy." "And what else have you against the man?" asked the Khalifa. "What service has the man rendered to Government," I continued; "that, supposing I am a spy, I should trust this fugitive with my secrets. As far as Yusef el Gasis is concerned, you, my master, well know that he escaped at a time when it was absolutely impossible for me to have any communication with him. I, who am always near you, have no intercourse with people who assist others to fly; and even supposing I had, and that I were a traitor, it would certainly be much more natural that I should have escaped myself. It is quite possible the English may know that my house is opposite to the powder magazine; for the man who, with your kind permission, brought me the letters from my brothers and sisters knew it, and, in all probability, told them about it. It is also possible that my relatives with whom, at your express command, I have ceased to have any communication, should make inquiries about my welfare through the Government clerks and merchants who sometimes go from here to Cairo, and who probably know the position of my house; but the assertion that, in case of war, I had engaged myself to seize your ammunition stores, is quite ridiculous. As far as I can judge, the Government would never dare to attack you, who are the ever victorious and uncon-

querable Khalifa, in your own country; and if this well-nigh impossible event should take place, how do I know that I shall be in my present house at that time? Moreover, at such a critical period, my hope and desire is to stand in the front rank of your victorious troops, and there seek an opportunity of proving my loyalty and devotion by shedding my blood in your cause. Sire, I rely upon your justice, which is well known to all; will you sacrifice one who has been for so many years your devoted servant, to the whim of a Dongolawi who is one of your enemies?" "How do you know that the man who has given evidence against you is a Dongolawi?" asked the Khalifa, quickly. "Some time ago I saw the man at your gate with Abderrahman Wad en Nejumi esh Shahid ("the martyr," as he was called after his death), * and owing to his forwardness and impudence I had to call on your mulazemin to remove him by main force; no doubt he now wishes to revenge himself, and at the same time curry favour with you, by casting suspicion on me. You to whom God has given wisdom to govern your subjects, will also judge me righteously and fairly."

"I have summoned you here," said the Khalifa, after a long pause, "not to judge you, but to show you that, in spite of the frequent attempts to cast suspicion on you, I have in no way withdrawn my confidence in you. Had I believed what the man said, I should not have imprisoned him; no doubt you have enemies here, and there are probably envious people who are jealous

* By mere chance I had heard that the man's name was Taib Wad Haj Ali, and that he had once been in Omdurman with Nejumi.

of your being near me. But beware! where there is no fire, there is no smoke." He then signed to me to withdraw, and soon afterwards the assembly broke up.

That night I asked one of my comrades whom I knew I could trust, to tell me what the Khalifa had said after I had left. He told me that Abdullahi admitted the man was a liar, but that there might be some truth in his statement; he had also said I might possibly have enemies in Cairo who were intriguing against me. This had also occurred to me whilst I was speaking, but I did not mention it, as I hesitated to throw down all my cards; now that he had thought of it himself, my silence had stood me in good stead, for I could bring forward this argument in my defence, should some fresh accusation be brought against me. But how long was I to continue in this wretched position? How long was I to keep up this constant strain of always standing on the defensive; how much longer could my present relations with the Khalifa last? I knew he was only waiting for an opportunity to make me harmless, for he was perfectly well aware that I was at heart his enemy; but in truth I thanked God most fervently that he treated me with greater leniency than he did the rest. How difficult it was to carry out Madibbo's advice; but how true it was that he who lives long sees much!

The following morning, after prayers, as I was on my way home, I was overtaken by Gereifawi, who had succeeded Adlan and was on friendly terms with me. "You are a rare visitor," said I, shaking hands with him; "please God you have good reasons for it!" "Yes," said he; "but I am come to disturb you. I require your house; and I must ask you to leave it

to-day. I will give you one in place of it which lies to the southeast of the mosque, and in which the Khalifa's guests are usually housed; it is somewhat smaller than your own, but you have only the road between it and the mosque, and this will thoroughly suit a pious man like you!" "All right," said I; "but tell me privately who sent you here, the Khalifa or Yakub?" "Ah, that is a secret!" said he, laughing; "but after your conversation yesterday with the Khalifa, you can surely understand the reason; probably," he continued ironically, "our master, out of his great love for you, wishes to have you in close proximity to himself; your house is scarcely two hundred paces from his own. When may I come and take over your old house?" "I shall have finished moving by the evening," said I; "it will take me some little time to remove the fodder for my horse and mule. Is the house I am to have uninhabited?" "Of course it is. I have given orders for it to be cleaned, and will now return to make the necessary arrangements; but you had better begin moving at once, and I hope your new house will bring better luck than your old one," said Gareifawi, leaving me.

Undoubtedly this was a very clear case of want of confidence in me on the Khalifa's part. He was anxious to remove me from the neighbourhood of the ammunition stores and powder magazine, which, in case of war, I was supposed to seize. I now called together my household, and told them to begin moving at once. They cursed the Khalifa freely, and called down all the punishments of Heaven on his head. Little by little, year by year, they had gone on building. They had

dug wells fifty feet deep, and planted lemon and pomegranate trees, which were just about to bear fruit, and had, so to speak, made themselves comfortable. For me, the move was quite immaterial. How I had prayed to leave this house, though not in this way! However, as Gereifawi had said, perhaps the new house would bring me better luck; and I was by no means the only man who had been turned out of his abode at short notice. The whole portion of the city lying north of the Khalifa's house had been vacated at a moment's notice by the Ashraf and their relatives; and they had not even been allowed to remove their furniture, nor had they received the smallest compensation. They had been given a patch of stony ground to the west of the town, where they had been ordered to build fresh houses. After all, I was better off than they. Recent events had depressed me considerably, and I saw that the situation was now becoming almost unbearable; but more trouble was in store for me which was to throw completely into the background that of which I now complained.

One of my acquaintances, a Darfur merchant who had frequently travelled backwards and forwards to Egypt, Alexandria, and Syria, and who had gradually understood the various nationalities, realised that I was an Austrian. He had surmised correctly that, although a captive for many years, and shut off from all communication with my own people, I still took an intense interest in all that concerned my native land. He spoke to me in the mosque, told me hurriedly about affairs in Egypt, and then handed me an Egyptian newspaper of old date which, he said, had accidentally come into his

hands in Alexandria, and which contained an article about Austrian affairs. Hurrying home, I opened the paper, and found, to my dismay, the news of the death of our Crown Prince Rudolf. I cannot describe the distress which this news caused me. I had served in his regiment; and I had never given up hope that some day I should return home, and have the pleasure of assuring him that, under all the strange and sad circumstances of my eventful life, I had always endeavoured to uphold the honour of an officer belonging to the Imperial regiment. But what were the trials and troubles of one obscure individual in comparison with this great national calamity,—nothing!

Again and again my mind turned to the grief of our beloved Emperor, to whom we Austrians look up as to a father. What must he have felt and suffered!

Here in the midst of this unsympathetic crowd my mind was filled with these sad thoughts; but I did not dare show that I was affected. It required all my self-control to hide from the rude gaze of the Mahdists the expressions of distress which came over my face when I thought of my beloved home; and, in the internal struggle which was going on almost continuously, I sometimes longed for the time when an end should be put to my wretched existence. To-day all the old sores had broken out afresh. The man would have done me a far greater service had he kept back the newspaper. It had only brought fresh trouble upon me, and depressed me more than ever. My comrades at the Khalifa's door—ignorant of the real cause of my sorrow—advised me to appear as cheerful as possible, and to show no displeasure about my enforced removal to an-

other house, as the Khalifa was sure to have instructed his spies to watch me carefully, and see how I took his unwelcome order. I therefore tried to look as unconcerned as possible, and, to account for my depression, I pretended to be unwell,—what a life of dissimulation! Fortunately the Khalifa was busied with other matters. A letter had reached him from Ahmed Wad Ali at Gallabat, complaining of the treatment he received at the hands of his superior, Zeki Tummal; and, a few days afterwards, he arrived, in order to make his complaint personally. He said that in his own name, and in the name of all the other Emirs, he refused to put up with the continual insults and arbitrary confiscation of property on the part of Zeki, whom he also accused of conspiring to make himself independent. The Khalifa knew perfectly well that most of these complaints arose from Zeki's unpopularity with his assistants. He therefore wrote to him to at once refund all the confiscated property, and to accord to his Emirs the treatment to which their position entitled them. At the same time, he instructed Ahmed Wad Ali to return forthwith to Gallabat, and gave him secret orders to watch closely his chief's movements, and personally report to him.

Abu Girga, who by this time had been recalled from Kassala, and had been replaced there by Mussaid, being a Dongolawi, was considered by the Khalifa to be a source of danger in Omdurman. Under the pretext, therefore, of sending reinforcements to Reggaf, he despatched him with two steamers up the White Nile, and, at the same time, Omar Saleh was recalled to give a report of affairs in Equatoria. Abu Girga was nominated Emir of the whole country, and commander of all the

rifle and spear men; but, at the same time, Mukhtar Wad Abaker, one of the Khalifa's relatives, was appointed to superintend him.

A few days after the steamers had left, the Khalifa fell seriously ill with an attack of typhus fever. All Omdurman watched the course of the illness with the most intense anxiety, for his death would have been the signal for a complete change in the administration of the country. Khalifa Ali Wad Helu, who, according to Mahdist law, should be the successor, watched the illness with almost breathless interest; and his followers and tribe showed such deep concern that they fell under the suspicion of wishing to seize the reins of government. The Khalifa's powerful constitution, however, got the better of the malady; and it seemed as if the wretched inhabitants of the Sudan had not been sufficiently punished, and that God did not yet intend to remove from them this terrible scourge. After an illness of about three weeks, Abdullahi took the first possible opportunity of appearing before his followers, who greeted him with frantic acclamations,—the outcome, in the majority of cases, of a desire merely to make a noise. Only his own relatives and some of the western Arabs really rejoiced at his recovery. But the Khalifa had no delusions about the imaginary sentiment to which his followers had given vent during his illness. He knew perfectly well that in showing the preference to his own tribe, he had given umbrage to many of the western Arabs, who, being strangers in the land, it was most necessary to retain on his side. The inhabitants of the Nile valley and of the Gezira, the majority of whom were Jaalin and Danagla, were his enemies; but, dis-

armed, and their property confiscated, he had made them powerless, and every now and then he sent considerable detachments of them to reinforce Darfur, Gallabat, and Reggaf. He did not hide from himself that Khalifa Ali and his followers were anxious to step into his shoes; but he knew that they would never be foolish enough to attempt to carry out their plans by main force, as the Ashraf had done.

Now that I had my abode close to him, he was more suspicious than ever of me. He continually inquired of my comrades if this strict supervision did not make me indignant, and he did all he could to find fault with my conduct; but, fortunately, the mulazemin were on friendly terms with me, and always reported favourably of me. At the same time, they secretly warned me that the Khalifa's dislike of me was increasing, and that I must be most careful.

One day, in the month of December, 1892, when I had just left the Khalifa's door to take a short rest, one of the mulazemin summoned me to the Khalifa's presence. I found him in the reception room, surrounded by his Kadis, and the threats and reprimands which I had received on the occasion of Taib Haj Ali's calumny were still fresh in my mind. I was therefore considerably dismayed when the Khalifa, without returning my salute, ordered me to take my seat amongst the judges. "Take this thing," said he, after a short pause, and in a very severe tone, "and see what it contains." I at once arose and took in both hands the object he gave me, and then sat down again. It consisted of a brass ring of about four centimetres in diameter, attached to which was a small metal case about the size and shape of a

revolver cartridge. An attempt had been made to open it, and I could plainly see that it contained a paper. This was indeed an anxious moment for me. Could it be a letter from my relations, or from the Egyptian Government; and had the messenger who brought it been captured? Whilst I was engaged in opening the case with the knife which had been given me, I turned over in my mind how I should act, and what I should say; and, as good luck would have it, I had not on this occasion to have recourse to dissimulation. Pulling out two small papers, and opening them, I found inscribed on them, in minute but legible handwriting, in German, French, English, and Russian languages the following:—

This crane has been bred and brought up on my estate at Ascania Nova, in the Province of Tauride, in South Russia. Whoever catches or kills this bird is requested to communicate with me, and inform me where it occurred.

(Signed) F. R. FALZ-FEIN.

September, 1892.

I now raised my head, which hitherto I had kept closely bent down; and the Khalifa asked, "Well, what do the papers contain?" "Sire," I replied, "this case must have been fastened to the neck of a bird which has been killed. Its owner, who lives in Europe, has requested that anyone who finds the bird should let him know where it was caught or killed." "You have spoken the truth," said the Khalifa, in a somewhat more amiable tone; "the bird was killed by a Shaigi near Dongola, and the cartridge case was found attached to its neck. He took it to the Emir Yunes, whose secretary was unable to decipher the writing of the Christian, and he therefore forwarded it to me. Tell me now what is

written on the paper?" I translated the message, word for word, and, at the Khalifa's command also tried to describe the geographical position of the country from which the bird had come, and the distance it had travelled before it was killed. "This is one of the many devilries of those unbelievers," he said, at last, "who waste their time in such useless nonsense. A Mohammedan would never have attempted to do such a thing."

He then ordered me to hand over the case to his secretary, and signed to me to withdraw; but I managed to take one more hurried glance at the paper,—Ascania Nova, Tauride, South Russia, I repeated over and over again to imprint it on my memory. The mulazemin at the door anxiously awaited my return; and when I came out from the presence of my tyrannical master with a placid countenance, they seemed greatly pleased. On my way to my house, I continued to repeat to myself the name of the writer and his residence, and determined, that should Providence ever grant me my freedom, I should not fail to let him know what had happened to his bird.

In accordance with orders, Mahmud Ahmed now returned to Omdurman with all his available troops (about five thousand) from Darfur, leaving there only sufficient men for the garrison. He pitched his camp at Dem Yunes on the south side of the city.

Once more I underwent a period of considerable trial. The Khalifa again instituted a series of military manœuvres for all the troops in Omdurman; and, as usual, they resulted in the wildest confusion. I had to perform the duties of aide-de-camp, and invariably had

to bear the blame for everything that went wrong; but all things come to an end, and at last Mahmud Ahmed was ordered back to Gallabat, after his troops had renewed their oath of allegiance, in return for which they received some new jibbas.

The Khalifa now turned his attention to the Equatorial regions, where Abu Girga resided as nominal Governor, and despatched two steamers with three hundred men, under the command of his relative Arabi Dafalla, to Reggaf with instructions to depose Abu Girga, and throw him into chains. It was abundantly clear that the latter had only been sent to Reggaf to get him out of the way. Dafalla's departure was also taken advantage of to exile Khaled, who had been lying heavily chained in the Saier.

Dafalla was instructed to extend the Mahdist territory as far as possible in all directions, and to send back to Omdurman as many slaves and as much ivory as he could obtain. Whilst the expedition was being got ready, the Khalifa, under the pretext of giving Zeki Tummal special verbal instructions regarding an intended campaign against the Italians, recalled him to Omdurman. Ahmed Wad Ali had faithfully carried out his secret instructions, which had resulted in the recall of his chief. A few days after the steamers had left, Zeki arrived at Omdurman accompanied by some of the Emirs whom he looked upon as friendly. During his absence, he had nominated Ahmed Wad Ali as his representative, and had ordered him to await his return at Gedaref. The Khalifa, to all outward appearance, received Zeki in the most friendly manner possible; and,

a few days after his arrival, in spite of their orders, Ahmed Wad Ali and the other Emirs arrived at Omdurman, and were frequently received in secret audience by Abdullahi. They brought proofs of Zeki's duplicity and disobedience to the Khalifa's commands in not restoring the property which he had confiscated; and they showed how he had subverted his instructions by inducing his men to become participators in a conspiracy by which he should become independent. The Khalifa and his brother Yakub took counsel together, and agreed to make him harmless once and for all. They thought that if they merely removed him from his position, dissensions might arise amongst his men. On the following morning, therefore, the unsuspecting Zeki, relying on the former services he had rendered, and anticipating merely a reprimand, was enticed into Yakub's house, where he was immediately seized from behind by four men, his sword wrenched from him, and his hands tied behind his back. He had frequently spoken disrespectfully of Yakub and Kadi Ahmed, saying that, in comparison with a brave warrior like himself, they were little better than women, and were only happy in receiving presents and leading comfortable and voluptuous lives. Disarmed and bound, he was now brought, a miserable captive, before his master, who awaited him in an adjoining court.

"Well, my fine hero, where is your courage now?" said Yakub. "You owed your promotion to me," said Kadi Ahmed, who, when Zeki had been nominated to the supreme command, had conveyed the news to him in Gallabat; "and now you have to thank me for your present humiliation. Praise be to God, who has preserved

me to this day in order that I may see you standing thus before me."

Livid with rage, and grinding his teeth, Zeki answered, "I have been surprised and betrayed. Were I in an open field, not a hundred men like you would terrify me. I know I am lost; but after my death you will try to find men like me to take my place, and you will not find them." At a signal from Yakub, he was hurried off to the general prison, where his body was covered with as much weight of iron as it could possibly bear. He was then removed to a small detached stone hut, deprived of all communication with others, and not even allowed sufficient bread and water to sustain life, and consequently, after an imprisonment of twenty days, he succumbed to hunger and thirst.

On his arrest, his house was sequestrated, and in it were found fifty thousand Maria Theresa and Medjidi dollars, and quantities of gold rings and other jewellery looted from the Abyssinians. Some of the Black soldiers who were devoted to him, and had accompanied him from Gallabat, were also thrown into chains and died of starvation.

Ahmed Wad Ali now succeeded Zeki in the supreme command, and at once returned to Gedaref, whither, in the meantime, the entire army had moved from Gallabat. In accordance with the Khalifa's instructions, he confiscated the whole of his predecessor's property, consisting of horses, camels, cattle, and slaves, which he despatched, together with all his wives (numbering one hundred and sixty-four), and twenty-seven children, to Omdurman. The Khalifa kept the cattle and slaves for himself, and distributed the childless widows amongst his followers;

but he married the mothers to his slaves, so that the children, whose father had been a slave, should be brought up as slaves. Seven of Zeki's brothers and near relatives were cruelly murdered by Ahmed Wad Ali; and one of his sisters was flogged to death on the pretext that she had concealed money.

Wad Ali, now in supreme command, was anxious to refute any idea of timidity, and sought to gain military renown. He obtained the Khalifa's permission to undertake operations against the Arab tribes living between Kassala and the Red Sea, who were subject to the Italians; but he received distinct orders not to attack any troops quartered in forts. He was allowed to utilise the services of the Kassala garrison under Mussaid Gaidum, and now made all preparations for a campaign. Leaving Gedaref with his army, early in November, 1893, he joined the Kassala troops, and his force numbered in all some four thousand five hundred riflemen, four thousand spearmen, and two hundred and fifty horsemen, and advanced against the eastern Arab tribes,—the Beni Amer, Hadendoa, and others. The latter, apprised of his intention, drove off their cattle and retired before him; but at Agordat he came up with the Italian troops, who were in an entrenched position. As they were in such small numbers, he resolved, in spite of the Khalifa's instructions, to attack them; but he was heavily defeated, and himself killed, together with his two principal leaders, Abdalla Wad Ibrahim and Abder Rasul, and a number of Emirs. The loss in killed and missing was estimated at about two thousand, and these belonged, almost without exception, to the Gedaref force, because Mussaid and the Kassala troops did not come to Ahmed Wad

Ali's assistance. Had the Italian troops been in a position to pursue the Mahdists, who were retreating in wild disorder on Kassala, there is little doubt the latter would have been almost entirely annihilated.

The news of the defeat and death of Ahmed Wad Ali caused the greatest consternation in Omdurman, though in public the Khalifa tried to appear unconcerned. He affirmed that the losses sustained by the Italians were infinitely greater than those suffered by his troops, and that he thanked God, Ahmed Wad Ali and some of his leaders had died the death of martyrs on the field of battle, fighting against the cursed Christians. In reality, however, he spent many sleepless nights; for he feared that the Italians, encouraged by their victory, would be induced to advance on Kassala, and he fully realised that, in view of the panic which prevailed, they would have no difficulty in seizing and occupying it. It was not till some days had elapsed, and he had received news that the enemy had not quitted its position, that he calmed down somewhat, and began to consider whom he should nominate as Wad Ali's successor. The army of the latter had been dispersed throughout the Gedaref districts; and it was necessary to despatch reinforcements without delay. The inhabitants of Omdurman, however, saw in the defeat of Wad Ali, Heaven's just retribution for the death of Zeki Tummal, who, though he had been guilty of cruelty and oppression, had been the victim of intrigue and false evidence. They were justly enraged against the Khalifa, who in his vengeance had not been satisfied with Zeki Tummal's murder, but had also massacred his relatives and seized his women and children.

The Khalifa now nominated his cousin Ahmed Fedil as commander of the Gedaref army, and gave him strict injunctions to remain entirely on the defensive. He proceeded to his post by way of Kassala, in order to collect the scattered troops, who, after the defeat at Agordat, had forced themselves on the villagers, and were harrying the country for food. Once again the Khalifa's equanimity was upset by a rumour that the Italians now intended advancing on Kassala; but this news was followed soon afterwards by a contradiction, and he became pacified. Indeed, he had publicly announced his intention of avenging Ahmed Wad Ali's defeat, though in reality he had not the slightest idea of doing so; but, in his ignorance, he believed that these false threats would prevent his enemies from assuming the offensive. He also sent small detachments of horse and spear men to Gedaref.

A few months had elapsed since this catastrophe, when one day, just after morning prayers, three men presented themselves at the door of the Khalifa's house, and urgently demanded to be taken before him. I at once recognised them as Baggara Emirs, who had been stationed at Kassala, and from the expression of their faces I could see that the news they brought would not be welcome to the Khalifa. In a few minutes, they were admitted, and soon afterwards a considerable disturbance took place round the Khalifa's door. Khalifa Ali Wad Helu, Yakub, as well as all the Kadis, received a sudden summons to attend at a council. The Khalifa's suspicions had been verified, and Kassala, after a short fight, had been captured by the Italians.

It was impossible to withhold this news from the public. The ombeÿa was sounded, the great war-drums

were beaten, the horses were saddled, and the Khalifa, accompanied by all his mulazemin and an immense number of horse and spear men, solemnly rode down to the banks of the Nile. Arrived here, he forced his horse into the river till the water reached its knees; and, drawing out his sword, and pointing towards the east, he shouted out in a loud voice, "Allahu akbar!, Allahu akbar! (God is most great!). Each time the cry was taken up by the immense crowd; but the majority were inwardly rejoicing at the Khalifa's discomfiture. They longed for him to receive fresh humiliation, thinking thereby to lighten the terrible yoke they bore. After this display, the Khalifa turned his horse about, came back to the river bank, dismounted, and sat down on his sheepskin. A great crowd now collected round him; and he informed them of the fall of Kassala, declaring that his followers had been taken unawares by enormous numbers of the enemy, just after morning prayers, and had been forced to retire. He stated, however, that all the war material, women, and children had been saved, that the losses had been insignificant, whilst the enemy had suffered so heavily that they now bitterly regretted having taken the town. Even his most devoted adherents well knew that these words were a mere pretext for covering a disgraceful defeat. Almost immediately after the three Emirs had arrived in Omdurman, it was known far and wide that the garrison had been surprised, that partly from fear, and partly owing to the unpopularity of Mussaid, they had refused to fight; and, almost without offering any resistance, they had retired towards Goz Regeb. The Khalifa now realised that his capital was more fully exposed than ever to a successful advance

on the part of his enemies; but he had not yet learnt all; and when it eventually came to his ears that his faithful followers, instead of gladly laying down their lives for the cause, had lost the fanatical spirit which had for so many years made them the terror of their enemies, he understood that not only in Kassala had public opinion changed, but that throughout the whole country his popularity had waned. He now took occasion to announce publicly that Kassala was merely a minor position of no special importance; but that in a short time he meant to retake it, as well as the entire country up to the shores of the Red Sea. He returned home late that evening, and held a council with his brother Yakub and the Kadis, regarding the precautions which should now be taken. He must have bitterly regretted the absence of his chief Kadi, Ahmed Wad Ali, who, though he neither sought nor took his advice, had been his faithful friend and servant for the last ten years. As chief judge, he had acquired an immense influence in the country; and, considering the circumstances, he had during that time collected very considerable wealth. Upwards of a thousand slaves worked on his immense estates. He employed merchants to take the produce, such as India-rubber and ostrich feathers, to Egypt. He possessed immense herds of cattle, and quantities of camels and magnificent horses; but his most coveted possession was his harem, in which were collected a large number of lovely women and female slaves. All this had roused the cupidity of Yakub and of the Khalifa's young son. The former was intensely irritated against Ahmed, as he seldom paid the smallest attention to his opinions or proposals. Even the Khalifa had be-

come jealous of his influence, and lent a willing ear to Yakub's insinuations that he abused his power, and made use of his position to increase his own wealth. Under the pretext that Ahmed had acted contrary to the instructions which the Khalifa had specially laid down, he himself, as President of the Court of Kadis, had sentenced him to perpetual imprisonment. Thus a just retribution had at length fallen on the head of this unscrupulous judge, who had ruthlessly condemned numbers of innocent persons, had robbed them of all they possessed, had turned wives and children into widows and orphans, and had perpetrated every description of injustice. He had been seized by the Black soldiers, thrown into prison, and lost all his wealth, whilst the Khalifa, his son, and his brother Yakub had rifled his harem of the best and prettiest women, and distributed the remainder amongst their followers.

The Khalifa knew perfectly well the difficulties of recapturing Kassala; but, in order to make a show of doing something, he sent instructions to Osman Digna, who was at Adarama on the Atbara, some three days' march from Berber, to join Mussaid at Goz Regeb with all his available forces. At the same time, he ordered Ahmed Fedil to make a military post of a thousand rifles at El Fasher on the Atbara, about one and a half days' journey from Kassala. He also sent detachments of troops from Omdurman to Asubri on the Atbara, midway between El Fasher and Goz Regeb. He continued to assert most resolutely that he intended shortly to advance on Kassala; but all these arrangements were made entirely with a view to establishing a series of defensive posts along the line of the Atbara, whilst the

troops he was constantly collecting were intended to oppose the advance of the enemy towards Omdurman.

In the midst of all this disturbance and excitement, the satisfactory news arrived that a messenger sent by Arabi from Reggaf had arrived at Omdurman from Katena, a town on the White Nile. Two steamers soon followed, bringing cargoes of ivory and slaves; and, in a day or two, four hundred male slaves were marched with great pomp and ceremony through the city, as proof of Dafalla's successes in the Equatorial regions. As a matter of fact, the latter had attacked and defeated a detachment of Emin Pasha's troops who had separated from the main body, and had been living independently, and at their own risk, in a track of country governed by Fadl el Maula, one of Emin's subalterns. On the Pasha's departure, this man had entered into communication with the advanced agents of the Congo Free State, and had agreed with them that, if they should assist him to re-occupy the Equatorial Province, he would enter their service. His real intentions, however, were to remain independent, and though nominally a servant of the Congo Free State, to derive from them as much profit as he could for his own personal benefit. Misled by false information, Fadl el Maula had ventured close to the station of Reggaf, which he believed to be only lightly held by the Mahdists; but he discovered his mistake too late. He beat a rapid retreat, but was followed up and overtaken, after several days' march, by Arabi Dafalla, who surprised his camp whilst most of the men were out on a foray. Fadl el Maula himself was killed, with most of the men in camp, whilst defending their wives and children; and Arabi captured a

quantity of loot, all the women and children, and a number of rifles. Amongst the trophies he sent to Omdurman were four Congo Free State flags made of blue bunting, with a five-pointed yellow star in the centre, also two suits of black uniform with buttons, on which the words "Travail et Progrès" were engraved. This was the first time I had seen the badge of the Congo Free State, of the existence of which I had heard; but I had no notion of its size or the extent of its boundaries. Several European letters had also been found in Fadl el Maula's camp; but the Khalifa did not show them to me. He preferred to remain in ignorance of their contents, rather than that I should gain some insight into affairs in those regions. The brilliance of this last success of his arms was, however, considerably dimmed by the news which came soon afterwards, that Christian agents from the south and west were advancing towards the Equatorial Provinces. Arabi had received information that a force was in Uganda, and that Christian troops were advancing from the western districts of Central Africa; and he appealed for instructions as to how to act. A reinforcement of four hundred men was at once despatched to Reggaf; and orders were sent to him to withdraw all outlying posts, should he be threatened, but under no circumstances to abandon Reggaf.

When the expedition had been sent against Emin Pasha, it was the Khalifa's intention not to acquire more territory in this direction, but to make a station from which raids could be made on the Black countries, in order to procure ivory and slaves.

After the steamer had left with reinforcements, the Khalifa again turned his attention to affairs in the east.

He ordered all the Jaalin in Omdurman to proceed to Asubri, and nominated Hamed Wad Ali, the brother of Ahmed Wad Ali, to the command of this post. He subsequently despatched thither the Danagla, as well as a number of Arab horsemen to Gedaref; and the camel-owning Arabs were instructed to supply three thousand camels, of which a thousand were incorporated with the mounted corps at Gedaref, whilst the remainder were used to transport grain from Rufaa and Abu Haraz on the Blue Nile to Asubri, which, having been abandoned by its former inhabitants, was now left entirely uncultivated; and in consequence the troops there were suffering great privations. By these measures, the Khalifa imagined that he had turned the line of the Atbara into a sort of wall, by which he hoped to block the enemy's advance; but it seemed as if he were likely to have no rest this year.

Mahmud Ahmed now reported that Christians had entered the Bahr el Ghazal districts, and were attempting to win over the native tribes, with whom they had already made treaties. They had arrived, he said, at Hofret en Nahas (the copper mines near Kalaka on the southwestern Darfur frontier). This news was of the greatest importance; and the Khalifa had every reason to feel alarmed and uneasy.

When Egypt governed the Sudan, it was from the Bahr el Ghazal Provinces that they recruited the men for the Sudanese battalions, who had come either of their own free-will or had been forcibly impressed. Owing to the climate and plenteous rainfall, the country is more highly cultivated than any portion of the Nile valley lying between Kowa and Reggaf. Besides, the

majority of the tribes who inhabit these districts are, owing to internal dissensions, incapable of uniting, and would thus rather facilitate than retard the advance of any foreign power wishing to make itself master of the province. For the Khalifa, however, the possession of this country is of vital importance. Its ruler, he knows, virtually holds the Sudan in his hands. These various Black tribes have no love for the Arab slave-hunters, and would aid any power which would guarantee their protection. The recruitment of four or five thousand local levies, possessing fighting qualities of a high order, would, for such a power, be a matter of no difficulty; and in the space of four or five years an army of from fifteen to twenty thousand men might be raised, by which not only Darfur and Kordofan, but indeed the whole Sudan, could be conquered.

Abdullahi, therefore, was not slow to realise the situation; and he at once gave orders to Mahmud Ahmed to despatch a force from Southern Darfur into these districts, and drive out the strangers who had dared to penetrate the Bahr el Ghazal Province.

In compliance with these instructions, the Emir Khatem Musa, with a considerable force, was sent south from Shakka into the northern Bahr el Ghazal districts, and the Faroghé, Kâra, Bongo, and other frontier tribes with whom the Europeans had made treaties, being left without support, at once submitted to the Mahdists who occupied their countries.

One day, I was summoned before the Khalifa, who handed to me several documents written in French, which he ordered me to translate. They included two letters from Lieutenant de La Kéthulle to his assistants,

containing various orders and instructions. They had been originally in the hands of the Sheikh of Faroghé, who had handed them over to Khatem Musa. In addition to these, the Khalifa showed me a treaty which had been drawn up between Sultan Hamed Wad Musa of the Faroghé and the representative of the Congo Free State, which was to the effect that,—

1. Sultan Hamed Wad Musa, chief of the Faroghé tribe, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Congo Free State, and placed himself under its protection.

2. Sultan Hamed Wad Musa bound himself to enter into commercial relations with the Congo Free State, and establish intercourse between it and the Darfur frontier districts, and agreed to give protection to all officials of that State travelling in his country.

3. The Congo Free State bound itself to assist Sultan Hamed Wad Musa in all his undertakings, and uphold his authority in the country.

This treaty was signed in August, 1894, by Hamed Wad Musa and the representative of the Congo Free State; and was witnessed by Sultan Zemio and the Sultan of Tiga, the names of the two latter being written in European characters.

I hurriedly translated these papers verbally to the Khalifa, and was much interested in seeing how, on this occasion, his curiosity got the better of his suspicions; though he did all he could to prevent me from noticing this.

"I did not summon you," he said, "merely to translate these letters, which, after all, are of not the smallest importance to me, though I have instructed Mahmud Ahmed to drive out these Christians, who are only tra-

vellers, and in small numbers, from the Bahr el Ghazal Province; but I have also a proposal to make to you. I look upon you as one of us,—as my friend and faithful adherent,—and I have decided to publicly make known this fact by giving to you as a wife one of my cousins,—one of my next of kin. What have you to say to this?" This offer did not greatly surprise me; for he had several times hinted as much. I was perfectly well aware that his object was not to publicly show appreciation of me, but to have me carefully watched in my own house. He wished to place me under surveillance in order to discover if I had any secret relations with outside countries. Through trusty friends, I had ascertained that he earnestly sought some plausible grounds for making me, as he called it, "harmless;" but in doing so he wished to justify his action before the public, by showing me more consideration as a foreigner than if I had been a native. I knew too well, however, that a man of his unscrupulous determination, who had not spared his best friends, such as Ibrahim Adlan and Kadi Ahmed, would not hesitate to take full advantage of the slightest proof of my disloyalty in order to rid himself of me.

"Sire," I replied, "may God bless you, and give you victory over all your enemies. I feel highly honoured by your magnanimous offer; but hear of me, I pray you, the truth. Your relative is not merely descended from royalty, but from the Prophet himself. She therefore deserves to be treated with every consideration. Unfortunately, I have a very quick temper, and at times have great difficulty in controlling myself. Domestic quarrels would undoubtedly arise, which might be the cause of

estrangement between you, my master, and myself. My only desire is to remain in your greatest favour. I pray God this may ever be so; for I dread the occurrence of anything which might cause me to fall into disfavour."

"I have known you now intimately for ten years," said the Khalifa;" and I have never known you to be thoughtless or quick-tempered. I have often presented you with wives, and they have never complained to me of domestic quarrels. It is true, however, that I have heard you have either made presents of them to your servants, or have given them their liberty. It seems to me that although you pretend to be one of us, you really wish to adhere to the manners and customs of your tribe. [He did not refer to religion, as I suppose he thought that might hurt my feelings.] I mean that you wish to have only one wife."

"Sire," I replied, "you have often honoured me with presents of slaves; but you surely do not wish me to be their slave. If I have married them to my servants, or sent them away, it is because they have been disobedient, or have behaved badly. You have been misinformed, if you think that I wish to adhere to the custom of my country to have only one wife; for I have already three."

"Very well," he said, "I believe you; and so you refuse to marry my cousin?"

"Sire," I replied, "I do not refuse; but I merely inform you of my uncertain temper, so that I may prevent unpleasantness in the future. Indeed, I am highly honoured by your kind offer; and I beg you to try and see if I am worthy of it." He understood perfectly well

that what I had said was tantamount to a refusal; and he closed the conversation by making a sign to me to withdraw. This offer had placed me in a most difficult position. I thoroughly understood the Khalifa. By not joyfully accepting his offer, I had hurt his pride; and now I longed more than ever for liberty. Some months before, I had sent a Sudanese merchant to Cairo, and had begged the Austrian Consul-General to place, through him, the necessary means at my disposal to effect my escape. But how often had I attempted negotiations of this sort through merchants and others, and how often had I been doomed to disappointment and failure.

CHAPTER XVI.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.

The Person and Characteristics of Khalifa Abdullahi.—The Fate of the Mahdist Chronicler.—The Princesses of Darfur.—The Khalifa's Family Life.—His Harem.—The Organisation of his Body-guard.—Enforced Attendance at the Mosque.—The postal System.—Military Parades.—Elevation of the Western Arabs and Oppression of the River Tribes.—The military Situation and Strength.—Guns and Ammunition.—Revenue and Expenditure.—Courage.

I WILL now say a few words regarding the Khalifa's person and his characteristics.

Sayed Abdullahi Ibn Sayed Mohammed belongs to the Taaisha section of the Baggaras (as all cattle-owning nomad Arabs are called). This section inhabits the country in the southwestern portion of Darfur; and the Khalifa himself is descended from the Aulad Om Sura of the Jubarat family. I have already referred to Abdullahi's early life, and how he had established a connection with the slave-hunting Arabs, when still quite a youth. He joined the Mahdi at the age of thirty-five, and was then a slim and active, though powerfully built man; but latterly he was become very stout, and his lightness of gait has long since disappeared. He is now forty-nine years of age, but looks considerably older; and the hair of his beard is almost white. At times, the expression of his face is one of charming amiability,

but more generally it is one of dark sternness, in which tyranny and unscrupulous resolution are unmistakably visible. He is rash and quick-tempered, acting often without a moment's consideration; and when in this mood, even his own brother dares not approach him. His nature is suspicious to a degree to everyone, his nearest relatives and members of his household included. He admits that loyalty and fidelity are rare qualities, and that those who have to deal with him invariably conceal their real feelings in order to gain their own ends. He is most susceptible to flattery, and consequently receives an inordinate amount from everyone. No one dares to speak to him without referring, in the most fulsome terms, to his wisdom, power, justice, courage, generosity, and truthfulness. He accepts this absurd adulation with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction; but woe to him who in the slightest degree offends his dignity.

The following episode will give the reader a fair idea of his arbitrary nature:—

A certain Kadi named Ismail Wad Abdel Kader, who had been well educated in Cairo, had gained great favour with the Mahdi by having written a laudatory account of his early victories. This had so fully gratified the great religious reformer that he instructed Abdel Kader to continue to chronicle the various important events as they happened, and further instructed his principal Emirs to forward to him detailed histories of all that occurred within their respective commands. In time, these chronicles grew into an elaborate historical and inflated statement of Mahdist rule in the Sudan; and, after the Mahdi's death, the Khalifa, who had in-

stalled Abdel Kader as state chronicler, ordered the continuance of the work. One day, however, during a pleasure-party, the historian had been overheard to say that present affairs in the Sudan, as compared with those in Egypt, might be described by the following simile: The Khalifa might be considered as the Khedive Ismail Pasha, whilst, in the same proportion, he, Abdel Kader, might be likened to Ismail Pasha el Mofettish, who had been the Viceroy's principal adviser and friend. This thoughtless statement was immediately reported to Abdullahi, who, furious at such a comparison, at once ordered the judges to assemble and make a full inquiry into the matter; and if Abdel Kader had actually made such a statement, he should be at once condemned. To the Kadis, he argued thus: "The Mahdi is the representative of the Prophet Mohammed, and I am his successor. Who, therefore, in the whole world holds so high a position as I? Who can be nobler than the direct descendant of the Prophet?" The inquiry proved the guilt of Abdel Kader, who, at the Khalifa's command, was thrown into chains and transported to Reggaf. "What business has he to compare affairs here with those of Egypt?" said the pompous Khalifa. "If he wishes to compare himself to a Pasha, then I, the descendant of the Prophet, will never demean myself to be put on a par with the Khedive,—a mere Turk." I suppose by these assertions he thought to impress the populace. The stupid man too, in his offended dignity, did not stop here. He at once ordered all the chronicles (of which several copies had been made) to be instantly burnt; but I heard privately that his secretary, who was being frequently referred to by

the Khalifa on the subject of the early events of his reign, secreted one copy for private reference; and if these strange chronicles could only be procured and translated into European languages, they would expose to the civilised world the methods of Mahdism in all its barefaced mendacity.

Abdullahi's pride and confidence in his own powers are indescribable. He firmly believes that he is capable of doing anything and everything; and as he pretends to act under Divine inspiration, he never hesitates to appropriate the merits of others as his own. For example, he stated that the Mahdi's tomb, which had been built with immense labour and trouble by the former Government architect Ismail, had been designed by himself entirely in accordance with Divinely inspired plans. He ascribed Osman Wad Adam's victory over Abu Gemmaiza, as well as Zeki Tummal's over King John of Abyssinia, to the inspired orders which he pretended he had issued. His character is a strange mixture of malice and cruelty. He delights to annoy and cause disappointment; and he is never happier than when he has brought people to complete destitution by confiscating their property, throwing them into chains, robbing families wholesale, seizing and executing all persons of tribal influence and authority, and reducing entire races to a condition of powerless impotence.

During the Mahdi's lifetime, he was entirely responsible for the severity of the proceedings enacted in his name, and for the merciless manner in which he treated his defeated enemies. It was Abdullahi who gave the order for no quarter at the storming of Khartum; and it was he who subsequently authorised

the wholesale massacre of the men, women, and children. After the fall of that city, it was he who, for the period of four days, declared the whole Shaigia tribe to be outlaws. When distributing the captured women and children, he was utterly regardless of their feelings. To separate children from their mothers, and to make their re-union practically impossible by scattering them amongst different tribes, was his principal delight. When Osman Wad Adam sent to Omdurman the sisters of the late Sultan of Darfur, the Princesses Miriam Isa Basi and Miriam Bakhita, he gave them their liberty, but took most of their female relatives into his own harem, and distributed the remainder amongst his followers; and, hearing that some Darfur people who were residing in Omdurman had called on the Princesses, and offered them presents, he had the latter arrested and made over as slaves to his two Emirs, Hassib and Kanuna, who were on the point of starting for Reggaf. In vain poor Bakhita's blind mother implored to be allowed to accompany her daughter; but she was forcibly prevented by the Khalifa's special orders, and died a few days later of a broken heart. Her daughter threw herself into the river as the boat started. She was saved, but subsequently died on the journey from fatigue and misery. Ahmed Gurab, an Egyptian born in Khartum, who had quitted the city as a merchant before the destruction of Hicks Pasha's army, had left behind him his wife, who was a Sudanese, and his daughter. He eventually returned to see them; and, on the day he arrived in Omdurman, he was brought before the Khalifa, to whom he explained the reasons of his return, and expressed a wish to enter his service. "I

accept your offer," said the Khalifa. "You will at once proceed to Reggaf, and fight in the Holy Cause against the heathen." In vain the unfortunate man begged and implored to remain with his wife and daughter, or at least to be allowed to see them; but the Khalifa ordered his mulazemin to take him at once on board the steamer, and guard him carefully, and on no account permit him to see his family. With a smile of fiendish delight, he said: "His fellow-passengers are Isa Basi and Bakhita. He may enjoy their society as much as he likes, if their masters will allow him."

Without the smallest rhyme or reason, he has caused the death of thousands of innocent people. He had the right hand and left foot of a certain Omar publicly cut off in the market-place, because he had failed to make lead, which he had said he could do, and for which purpose he had received a small sum of money in advance. During the horrible execution and mutilation of the Batahin, he had been present, and had looked with pleasure on the slaughter of his victims. I have described how his best friends and most faithful servants were victimised through his caprice, and how he had ruthlessly seized for himself their wives and daughters. Then what could be more cruel than his punishment of the Ashraf? No doubt they were guilty of mutiny; but he might have exiled or imprisoned them, instead of killing them with clubs and axes as if they had been dogs; and yet these were the near relatives of his former lord and master, the Mahdi.

In all intercourse with him, he demands the most complete humility and submission. Persons entering his presence stand in front of him with their hands

crossed over their breasts and their eyes lowered to the ground, awaiting his permission to be seated. In his audience chamber, he is generally seated on an angareb, over which a palm-mat is spread, and his sheepskin stretched out on it, whilst he leans against a large roll of cotton cloth which forms a pillow. When those brought before him are allowed to be seated, they take up a position as in prayers; with their eyes fixed on the ground; and in this posture they answer the questions put to them, and dare not move until permission is given them to withdraw.

Even in the mosque, when prayers are over, and he converses on general subjects, those in close proximity to him invariably maintain this attitude. He is most particular that all persons brought before him should keep their eyes downcast, whilst he himself scrutinises them most carefully. Some years ago a Syrian named Mohammed Said, who had the misfortune to have only one eye, happened to be near him when he was delivering a religious lecture, and unintentionally cast his blind eye in the direction of the Khalifa. The latter at once called me up, and told me to tell the Syrian never to come near him again, and if he did never to dare to look at him. At the same time he told me that everyone should be most careful to guard themselves against the evil eye; "For," said he, "nothing can resist the human eye. Illness and misfortunes are generally caused by the evil eye."

In spite of his tyrannical nature, the Khalifa shows to greater advantage in his private life. He is devoted to his eldest son Osman, who is now twenty-one years of age, and who has been instructed in all the com-

mentaries of the Kuran by able Mohammedan teachers; but his father never hesitated to change the teachers as often as his son wished; and when Osman affirmed to his father that he was sufficiently instructed, the latter at once withdrew his teachers. When he reached his seventeenth year, he was married to his cousin, the daughter of his uncle Yakub; and on this occasion the Khalifa departed from the strict observances as regards marriage enjoined by the Mahdi, and arranged a series of banquets extending over a period of eight days, to which almost every inhabitant in Omdurman was invited. He had a large red brick house built for his son in the space lying opposite to Yakub's residence, and had it furnished with all the comfort available in the Sudan. An attempt was even made to lay out a garden on the stony ground within the enclosure. Shortly afterwards, he gave his son two more of his female relatives in marriage, and innumerable concubines, which he himself selected; but he declared, in the most emphatic manner, that he would never permit him to marry a woman from any of the Nile valley tribes. He watches over his son's intercourse with strangers with the greatest jealousy, and considers it a most dangerous proceeding; and when he heard that, in the perversity of youth, his son entirely disregarded his injunctions, and held nightly orgies in his house, he had a new residence built for him within the Omdurman wall close to his own, so as to exercise greater supervision, and handed over his old house to Yakub.

He married his own daughter to the Mahdi's son Mohammed, to whom he bore no good will; whilst the latter was anxious to marry one of his own relations,

and had no love for the Khalifa's daughter. Abdullahi, however, as father-in-law, guardian, and master, absolutely forbade him to enter into any such alliance, and tried to insist on his affection for his daughter, with the result that a complete estrangement was brought about between man and wife, ending in a divorce; but the Khalifa was so annoyed that, out of pure fear, Mohammed had to take her back, and swear entire devotion to her for the rest of his life.

The Khalifa thought it incumbent on his position to maintain a large establishment; and as this was also entirely in conformity with his own inclinations, he gradually became possessor of a harem of over four hundred wives. In accordance with the Mohammedan law, he has four legal wives, who belong to free tribes; but, being a lover of change, he never hesitates to divorce them at will, and take others in their places. The other women of the household consist for the most part of young girls, many of whom belong to tribes which have been forced to accept Mahdism, and whose husbands and fathers fought against him. They are therefore regarded as booty, and have only the rights and claims of concubines, or, in some cases, of slaves. This large assortment of ladies varies in colour from light brown to the deepest black, and comprises almost every tribe in the Sudan. They are divided into groups of from fifteen to twenty, presided over by a superior; and two or three of these groups are placed under the orders of a free woman, who is generally a concubine specially selected by the Khalifa. A certain amount of grain and money is granted monthly to these superiors for the maintenance of their charges; and they also receive means to

purchase the necessary cosmetics, consisting of various sorts of oils, grease, and scent. The value of their clothing is regulated entirely by the comparative beauty, position, and character of the wearers, and consists for the most part of native-woven cotton cloth with parti-coloured borders, or of bright silk or woollen shawls imported from Eygpt. These are always distributed by the Khalifa himself or by his chief eunuch. As the wearing of silver jewellery was strictly prohibited by the Mahdi, mother-of-pearl buttons and oblong strips of red coral and onyx, threaded together, are worn round the wrists, ankles, and head. The hair is usually worn in innumerable small plaits, which are arranged in all sorts of different ways, and bedaubed with a quantity of oily and greasy scents; and to European olfactory nerves the odour emanating from a Sudanese lady "en grande toilette" is repulsive in the extreme. For the last few years the wives of the upper classes have again taken to wearing gold and silver jewellery; and the Khalifa's principal women indulge in these luxuries to a greater extent than the rest. The latter live in a series of large detached houses, something like barracks, surrounded by courts encircled with high walls. Special women are maintained to watch over their state of health; and they are obliged to report it to their master, the Khalifa, from time to time. When he wishes to summon any lady in particular to share his affections, he communicates his desire by means of little boy eunuchs. Occasionally, he holds an inspection of his entire household, and makes use of such opportunities to rid himself of those of whom he is weary, in order to make room for new attractions. Those disposed of in this way he generally passes on to

his near relatives, his special favourites, or his servants. The harem courts are carefully guarded by eunuchs and the Black mulazemin. The women are almost entirely cut off from intercourse with the outer world; and perhaps once a year their female relations are allowed to converse with them for only a short time.

The Khalifa's principal wife is called Sahra, and belongs to his own tribe. She has shared with him from earliest days all his joys and sorrows, and is the mother of his oldest children Osman and Kadija. During the early years of his reign, he would only eat the simplest food, cooked by her or under her superintendence. It consisted, as a rule, merely of asida, roast meat, and chickens; but as his household increased, he began to try the various sorts of cookery known to his new wives, many of whom were acquainted with the Turkish and Egyptian methods; and now, in place of the simple food, he indulges in far more luxurious fare, though to outward appearance he stills pretends to lead a life of simplicity and abstinence. These innovations brought about a quarrel between him and his wife Sahra, who pointed out that the new dishes might be bewitched or poisoned, and might end in his death, with the result that he twice sent her letters of separation; but, on the strong representations of his brother Yakub and the other members of the family, he was induced to cancel them.

He has in his service in all some twenty eunuchs, chief of whom is a certain Abdel Gayum, who is also charged with the superintendence of large quantities of land which are cultivated by slaves for the use of the household; and it is his duty to purchase the necessary

supplies of grain, and have in readiness the sheep and cattle required for domestic purposes. He also draws from the Beit el Mal the necessary amounts required for the payment of the women and servants of the harem. He has also charge of considerable sums of private money with which the Khalifa purchases the presents he secretly makes to his Emirs and other influential persons. To assist him in carrying out his multifarious duties, he has a staff of clerks and servants, who are always eunuchs or slaves, as the Khalifa will on no account allow any stranger to get an insight into his harem.

Abdullahi's dress consists of a jibba made of superfine white cotton cloth with a coloured border, loose cotton drawers, and on his head a beautifully made Mecca silk skull-cap, around which a small white turban is wound. Around his body a narrow strip of cotton, about five yards long, called wassan, is worn, and a light shawl of the same material is thrown across his shoulders. He formerly wore sandals; but latterly he has taken to wearing soft leather stockings of a light brown colour, and yellow shoes. When walking, he carries a sword in his left hand, and in his right a beautifully worked Hadendoa spear, which he uses as a walking-stick. He is invariably accompanied by twelve or fifteen little boy-slaves as his personal attendants. Many of these are children of Abyssinian Christians seized by Abu Anga and Zeki Tummal. Their duty is to remain always near him, and act as his messengers to various parts of the town. They usher into his presence all visitors, and must be ready day and night to carry his orders. When they reach the age of seventeen or eighteen, they are drafted into the ranks of the mulazemin, and their places

taken by others. The Khalifa thinks that by employing young boys, his secrets are less likely to be betrayed; and in this he is not far wrong, when one considers the extraordinary amount of bribery and corruption which prevails amongst the older classes. Within the house, into which these young boys are never admitted, he employs young eunuchs, who wait upon him, whilst the more advanced in age of this unfortunate class are relegated to the outer dependencies of the household. Even these juvenile domestics suffer considerable brutality at his hands. The slightest mistakes are punished by flogging, or the offenders are thrown into chains and starved.

Upwards of three years ago, he conceived the idea of augmenting his mulazemin by a species of body-guard; and for this purpose he selected a number of Jehadia from Mahmud Ahmed's and Zeki Tummal's armies. In addition to these, he called on the Emirs of the western tribes to provide a number of recruits for his mulazemin; but his orders were only partially obeyed. He selected a few of the sons of the best Jaalin families for incorporation in the body-guard; but he rigorously excluded all Danaglas and Egyptians, in whom he has no confidence. In this manner, he created a force of from eleven to twelve thousand men, who, with their wives and children, are all quartered close to his and his son's houses, and within the newly erected wall. This force is subdivided into three corps, under the respective commands of his son Osman, the Khalifa's young brother Harun Abu Mohammed, who is barely eighteen years of age, and his cousin Ibrahim Khalil, who has been recently replaced by an Abyssinian named

Rabeh, who has been brought up in the Khalifa's household.

Osman, in all matters regarding the mulazemin, is looked upon as the Khalifa's representative. The corps are subdivided again into sections of one hundred men, over each of which an officer called Ras Miya (head of the hundred), who has several assistants, has command. Over every five or six Ras Miya an Emir presides, who is also provided with an assistant. The Black soldiers, or Jehadia, are incorporated in the subdivisions, not with the free Arabs, but under the special command of the Emirs, who have therefore under their respective orders two or three hundred Jehadia, and the remainder Arabs. Almost all these are armed with Remington rifles, which, however, are kept in store, and are only issued on special feasts. The monthly pay of the mulazemin consists of half a Dervish dollar, and, every fortnight, one-eighth of an ardeb of dhurra. The grain is received fairly regularly, but the cash payment is merely a nominal one, and is very seldom issued. The salaries of the Ras Miya and Emirs are proportionately higher; and they receive frequent gifts of women and slaves from the Khalifa. The duty of the mulazemin and body-guard is to protect the person of the Khalifa; and all must accompany him when he rides out or holds reviews. Even when making a comparatively small expedition into the town they must proceed with him. They have always to remain in readiness in the open square in front of his house. Although the Khalifa has forbidden all Egyptian music, he has collected the former Black buglers, two of whom invariably accompany him. The call for a Ras Miya is that of captain; for Emir that of major; and for

commander that of colonel. Abdullahi frequently inspects the mulazemin at night, in order to see that they are in occupation of the posts allotted to them; and he pays special attention to the outposts. Owing to this unusually hard service, the Ras Miya and Emirs, under the pretext of illness, frequently go secretly to their houses, and great discontent prevails amongst them.

The Khalifa's public duties consist in saying the five prayers daily in the large mosque. At early dawn, he begins with the morning prayers, after which the Rateb is read in various groups, as enjoined by the Mahdi. This consists of a selection of verses and special prayers from the Kuran, and occupies about an hour. The Khalifa then returns, as a rule, to his private apartments, but sometimes walks about in the mosque in order to see for himself whether the inhabitants of Omdurman comply with his orders to attend prayers regularly. He holds midday prayers at about two o'clock, and two hours later follows the Asr, or evening prayer, after which the Rateb is repeated. Prayers are said again at sunset, and, three hours later, night prayers are held. On all these occasions, the Khalifa attends in his mihrab (niche), which has been erected immediately in front of the lines of believers. It is a square-shaped structure, consisting of a series of columns connected by open iron-work, through which he can see all that is going on around him. Immediately behind him are the seats of his son, the Kadis, and a few persons specially selected by himself. The mulazemin take up a position to the right and left, whilst the Black soldiers occupy large open enclosures which are separated from the mosque by a wall. On the right of the mulazemin are

the places of Yakub, the Emirs, and most of the western tribes, whilst to the left are some of Yakub's followers, a few of Khalifa Ali Wad Helu's Arabs, and the Jaalin and Danagla. Behind these, the people are seated in ten or twelve rows, and repeat the prayers in unison after the Khalifa. On all occasions there are several thousand persons present; and the Khalifa is most particular that all the principal Emirs and influential people should assist him. If he bears any special dislike or ill-will to any persons, he invariably condemns them to regularly attend the five daily prayers in the mosque, under the supervision of people specially selected for this purpose. In making these strict regulations regarding prayers, the Khalifa is by no means actuated by devotional ideas, but utilises these occasions to keep his followers together under his own personal control. As several of the people live a considerable distance away from the mosque, they are generally so tired and exhausted, after these frequent journeys to and fro, that they do not collect in the evening in each others' houses, —a practice which the Khalifa specially abhors, for his object is to destroy, as far as possible, what he is pleased to call "social life;" that is to say, social gatherings, for he is perfectly well aware that his deeds and actions on such occasions are invariably discussed and criticised, and not generally very favourably.

If, for any reason, such as illness, he is prevented from attending prayers, his place is taken by one of his Kadis, or by a very pious mulazem of the Takruri tribe; but on such occasions the substitute Imam is never allowed to occupy the mihrab, but stands outside. Khalifa Ali Wad Helu, who, in acordance with the reli-

gious law, should, on such occasions, represent the Khalifa, is scarcely ever permitted to do so.

In the afternoon, or between afternoon and evening prayers, he receives reports, news, and letters, and interviews the Kadis and Emirs whose names have been previously submitted to him, as well as any other persons whom he specially wishes to see.

His postal arrangements are very primitive. He keeps up from sixty to eighty riding camels, with a specially selected staff of postmen; and these he despatches to different parts of his Empire with orders and instructions. Ibrahim Adlan had suggested to him that he should make special stations for the posts along the various main roads, and establish a more regular and less expensive system; but he utterly refused to entertain the idea, saying that he placed special value on the verbal accounts of the postmen who were despatched direct, and he frequently obtained from them important information concerning the attitude and behaviour of his Governors. The Emirs of the various districts also have a similar postal system of their own, and despatch camel-men with important information to Omdurman. There is no system of postal communication for private persons, though sometimes the camel-postmen convey letters secretly. The Khalifa being intensely suspicious of all intercourse with strangers, any communications between his subordinates and the outside must be carried out with the greatest circumspection and secrecy. Utterly ignorant of reading and writing, the Khalifa orders all letters that arrive to be handed over to his secretaries, Abu el Gasem and Mudasser, who are obliged to explain the contents, and write replies in accordance with

his orders. These two individuals lead a wretched life; for they know that he will not forgive the slightest mistake, and should he have the least suspicion of their having revealed any of his secrets, even through carelessness, he would not hesitate to treat them as he treated their comrades Ahmedi and his four brothers, who, having been accused of communicating with the Ashraf, were executed.

He converses principally with his Kadis, who are, for the most part, willing tools in his hands, and serve to give a veneer of justice to his despotic actions. These myrmidons, submissively seated in a semi-circle on the bare floor, their heads bowed down, listen to his orders, which are generally given in an undertone; and rarely any one of them dares to open his mouth or make a suggestion, no matter how necessary he may think it. In addition to the Kadis, he occasionally interviews Emirs and other influential persons, from whom he ascertains the condition of the country and tribes; but he invariably stirs up intrigue, and tries to pit one against the other. He generally consults, immediately after night prayers, with Yakub and some of his near relatives; and these meetings often last till long past midnight. They are usually convened for discussing the ways and means of ridding themselves of persons who are objectionable, or who are in the smallest degree a menace to their authority.

Occasionally, he makes short riding excursions to various parts of the town, or visits his houses in the north or south of Omdurman. The melancholy notes of the ombeÿa and the beating of war-drums announce to the inhabitants that their master is about to appear in

public. Horses are at once saddled in the large thatched enclosure immediately behind the mosque. The doors are thrown open, and the mulazemin stream out from all directions, and, last of all, follows the Khalifa, mounted, as a rule, on horseback. A square is immediately formed around him; and the men advance in front of him in detachments, ten or twelve abreast. Behind them follow the horse and foot men of the town population, while on the Khalifa's left walks an immensely powerful and well-built Arab named Ahmed Abu Dukheba, who has the honour of lifting his master in and out of the saddle. On his right is a strongly-made young Black, who is chief of the slaves in the royal stables. The Khalifa is immediately preceded by six men, who alternately blow the ombeÿa by his orders. Behind him follow the buglers, who sound the advance or halt, or summon, at his wish, the chiefs of the mulazemin. Just behind these follow his small personal attendants, who carry the Rekwa (a leather vessel used for religious ablutions), the sheepskin prayer-carpet, and several spears. Sometimes, either in front or rear, as the case may be, follows the musical band, composed of about fifty Black slaves, whose instruments comprise antelope-horns, and drums made of the hollow trunks of trees covered with skin. The strange African tunes they play are remarkable rather for the hideously discordant noise they make than for their melody. These rides are generally undertaken after mid-day prayer; and the Khalifa returns at sunset. Whilst he is advancing in this solemn state, the mulazemin generally indulge in displays of horsemanship. Galloping four abreast, with

their spears poised high in the air, they dash up towards him at full speed, drawing up their horses almost on their haunches. They then slowly retire to repeat the operation.

During the early years of his rule, the Khalifa was present every Friday on the large parade ground where the ceremony of trooping the colours is performed; but now he attends only four times a year, viz., on the birthday of the Prophet, on the Feast of Miraj, the Feast of Bairam, and the Feast of Kurbam Bairam; on this last date all the troops in the neighbourhood, as well as the Darfur and Gedaref armies, are assembled during peaceful times. On the first day of the Feast of Bairam, the Khalifa holds prayers on the parade ground, and retires himself within a zariba in which a small mud-brick house has been built. A few special favourites, and a number of mulazemin, remain with him; but the rest of the troops and populace range themselves in long lines; and when the prayer is over he mounts a wooden pulpit, and delivers a sermon, which is generally specially prepared for him by his secretaries. This over, a salute of seven guns is fired, and all those who can afford it kill the sacrificial lambs prescribed by the religion; but, owing to the prevailing distress and poverty of the inhabitants, very few of them are in a position to bear this expense, and are obliged to content themselves with a sort of porridge which takes the place of a sacrificial dish. During the three following days, a review is held. Long before sunrise, the Emirs, with their flags and followers, collect and march to their allotted positions on the parade ground, which is an almost per-

fectly flat sandy plain, with a few stones here and there. The troops are marshalled in long lines in rear of each other, facing east.

Yakub has the principal flag,—an immense piece of black cloth, which is hoisted exactly opposite the Khalifa's zariba, and about four hundred yards from it. To the right and left are ranged those of the different Emirs, while on the north side flies the green flag of the Khalifa Ali Wad Helu, on either side of which are the flags of his Emirs. On the left flank, the horse and camel men are drawn up, while on the right flank are ranged the riflemen, consisting partly of Jehadia, and partly of men belonging to the various Emirs, who are only specially provided with arms for the time being. Immediately after sunrise, the Khalifa comes out of the zariba, and, mounted on his horse, stands surrounded by his mulazemin and body-guard, whilst the entire army passes in review before him, the troops being generally provided with new jibbas and turbans in honour of the feast. Sometimes the Khalifa mounts on a camel; and, on one occasion, he drove in the carriage of one of the former Governors-General which had been captured in Khartum, and which was kept stored away in the Beit el Mal. Two horses were specially trained to draw this vehicle, which the Khalifa ordered to be driven at a foot pace, as he feared being upset; but, latterly, he has given up this plan, and generally rides on horseback direct from the mosque along the road leading due west towards the black flag, and, on reaching it, he solemnly contemplates it for a few moments, and then rides to the zariba, at the south front of which a small shelter, consisting of trunks of trees lashed together and covered

with palm-mats, has been erected. Here he dismounts and reclines on an angareb, surrounded by his Kadis, whilst the troops file past. Occasionally, he starts from his own house, and, taking a southern road, marches out of the town, then turns west and rides along the front alignment of his troops, after which the usual march past takes place. At these reviews the horsemen are generally clad in coats of mail, of European or Asiatic origin, whilst on their heads they wear heavy iron helmets and curious cotton caps of various colours and the most grotesque shapes, round which a small turban is wound. The horses are clothed in large padded patchwork quilts, somewhat resembling those worn by the knights of old at tournaments; and one might almost imagine one was gazing at one of those old mediæval displays. These reviews terminate at the end of the third day; and the troops brought from beyond Omdurman are permitted to return to their respective garrisons.

I propose now to briefly consider the Khalifa's political intentions and ideas.

As I have already stated, when the Mahdi first declared himself, he nominated three Khalifas, viz., Abdullahi, Ali Wad Helu, and Mohammed Sherif, who were to succeed him in this order, if they survived. On his death, Abdullahi succeeded as arranged; but, from the moment he took over the reins of government, he did everything in his power to increase his personal ascendancy, and make it hereditary in the family. The mutinous Ashraf, who prided themselves on their relationship to the Mahdi, afforded him a welcome pretext for compassing their downfall; and he did not hesitate to possess himself of the Black troops belonging to both

his rival Khalifas. An obscure member of a western tribe, he was a complete stranger in the country; and he knew that he could not reckon on the Jaalin, Danagla, inhabitants of the Gezira, and other Nile valley tribes to support his authority. He therefore sent secret emissaries to the western Arabs to induce them to make a pilgrimage to the Mahdi's tomb, and emigrate to the Nile valley. His agents drew a tempting picture of the magnificent country to which they had been invited, telling them that they were the Lord's chosen people, and that they should go out to possess the land, the inhabitants of which were rich in cattle and slaves, which should be theirs. Tempted by these glowing accounts, many of these tribes emigrated of their own free-will to Omdurman; but as this contingent was not sufficient, the Khalifa instructed his Emirs in Darfur and Kordofan to enforce his orders; and, in consequence of this, an immense emigration took place, and continues, on a reduced scale, down to the present day. By this means the Khalifa has surrounded himself with hordes of strangers who have ousted the rightful owners of the soil, and have made themselves absolute masters of the situation. All offices and important situations are filled by them, and his own relatives, the majority belonging to the Taaisha section. Almost the only one of the old Emirs left is Osman Digna; and the reason for this is that the eastern Arab tribes he governs speak a language which is unknown to the western Arabs. Besides many of these tribes are gradually coming under Egyptian and Italian influence, and the few that are left are merely attached to Osman Digna because he is

one of them. Thus the Taaisha tribe has acquired all the power and authority in the land; and they fill their pockets with the waning revenues of the impoverished Sudan.

Years ago, the Emirs of Dongola and Berber had been instructed by the Khalifa to weaken the local population as much as possible; and, in consequence, fire-arms and weapons of all descriptions were taken from them, and they were reduced to a condition of complete harmlessness. Moreover, in the actions of Toski and Tokar numbers of Jaalin and Danagla were killed, whilst large contingents of them had been sent to Darfur and Gallabat in the hope that they might be eventually exterminated. In this manner the Khalifa has secured their countries, and rendered any attempt to oppose his authority almost impossible. The same may be said of the inhabitants of the Gezira, who have also been drafted off into various remote parts of the country, or have been forced to come to Omdurman with their families, where they have endured the greatest hardships and privations. Moreover, they were called upon to give up more than half their cultivated lands, which were distributed amongst the western Arabs; and all their best fields are now possessed by the Khalifa's own relatives and favourites. The former owners are often obliged to till the soil for their new masters, who have annexed their servants, slaves, and cattle. Thus the cultivable area of the Gezira, which, in former times, was the most populous and prosperous part of the Sudan, has been reduced by at least a half; and such commotion prevailed in the districts that the Khalifa was

himself obliged to intervene on behalf of the inhabitants, who were ill-treated, tyrannised over, and oppressed to an incredible extent.

As I have before stated, his own tribes are preferred on all occasions. Not only do they hold all the best positions and posts, but the greater part of the money and spoil which passes into the Beit el Mal from the provincial treasuries at Darfur, Gallabat, and Reggaf finds its way into their hands. For their special benefit he has imposed a horse tax, which must be paid in kind; and in this manner he has provided the majority of the Taaisha with chargers. His own section, the Jubarat, of course gets the lion's share of everything.

He never hesitates to make use of every description of intrigue in order to strengthen his own side and weaken the other. For example, on the defeat and death of Nejumi, whose flags belonged to those of Khalifa Sherif, and from whom Abdullahi had withdrawn all power of command over other Emirs, the remnant of the defeated force was placed under the direction of the Emir Yunes, and, in order to replace those who had been killed, he appointed fresh Jaalin and Emirs as well as men from Omdurman. These he first placed under the command of their compatriot Bedawi Wad el Ereik; but, instead of sending them to Dongola, they were despatched to Gedaref, and as an unavoidable delay occurred in their departure, he made out that this was a proof of disobedience, and condemned Bedawi, with six of his Emirs, to be banished to Reggaf; and in their place he nominated other Emirs, whom he placed under the direct command of his cousin Hamed Wad Ali.

It is human nature to seek the protection of the most powerful; and now, instead of being desirous to serve under their own Emirs, the greater number of the so-called opposition party vie with one another in their efforts to be placed under the direct command of the Khalifa or of Yakub; even the adherents of Ali Wad Helu come under this category. As an instance of this, I will quote the case of Hamed Wad Gar en Nebbi, who was the principal cause of the destruction of the Batahin. He belonged to the Hassanab tribe, which was commanded by Ali Wad Helu. Recognising how matters stood, he wished to place himself and his tribe under Yakub's command; but he was short-sighted enough to tell Khalifa Ali's relatives of his plans. He even went so far as to state in public that on the death of Abdullahi he would be succeeded by his brother Yakub or his son Osman, and that, as they had all the power in their hands, Khalifa Ali could expect nothing, and was, moreover, a weak man without energy. Several of the bystanders retorted that the Mahdi had nominated Khalifa Ali to be Abdullahi's successor, to which he replied that times had changed, that Abdullahi was all-powerful, and that the Mahdi's commands were never attended to or taken into consideration. When this interview came to the ears of Khalifa Ali, he charged Gar en Nebbi before the Kadi; and it was proved beyond a doubt that the latter had actually made these statements. He was consequently convicted of being "irreligious," having doubted the maintenance of the Mahdi's doctrines and instructions. Abdullahi could not therefore publicly interfere. Had he done so, he would have revealed his own intentions, which were in reality

well known, and would have corroborated Gar en Nebbi's assertions. The judges sentenced him to death; and although Abdullahi did all in his power to induce Ali Wad Helu to grant a reprieve, the latter insisted that the sentence should be carried out; and Gar en Nebbi was publicly executed in the market-place as an unbeliever and a disturber of public tranquillity. All the tribes under the command of Yakub, as well as the Khalifa's immediate followers, received instructions to show general dissatisfaction with the execution by openly absenting themselves from it.

Whenever it is a question between himself and his opponents, the Khalifa invariably relies upon his arms, which are far more than sufficient to overcome with ease any attempt to dispute his authority, whether it be in Omdurman itself or in any other part of the country. Within the Sudan, therefore, he is all-powerful; but he is not in a position to offer determined resistance to outside enemies. His leaders are neither capable nor sufficiently instructed to ensure victory. His men are not now loyal enough to fight with that determination which early fanaticism had inspired. They have little or no faith in the cause for which they are supposed to be fighting; and there is little doubt that the Khalifa's forces could not resist the advance of a foreign power bent on re-occupying the Sudan.

The table on the next page shows approximately the forces at present at the Khalifa's disposal. Of the forty thousand rifles shown in the table, there are not more than twenty-two thousand Remingtons in good condition. The remainder consist of single and double barrel smooth-bores, and other guns of a variety of

Position and Garrisons.	Emirs.	Armed Strength.			Guns.	Rifles and Smooth-Bores.
		Jehadia.	Cavalry.	Swords Spearmen.		
Omdurman (mulazemin)	Osman Sheikh ed Din .	11,000	. . . .	. . . .	. .	11,000
„	Yakub	4,000	3,500	45,000	46	4,000
„ (in store) .	. . . .	. . . .	. . . .	. . . .	. .	6,000
Reggaf	Arabi Wad Dafalla .	1,800	. . . .	4,500	3	1,800
Western Sudan:						
El Fasher . . . . }						
El Obeid . . . . }	Mahmud, etc. . . .	6,000	350	2,500	4	6,000
Shakka etc. . . . }						
Berber	Zeki Osman	1,6 0	500	1,300	6	1,600
Abu Hamed . . .	Nur en Nau . . .	400	100	700	4	400
Eastern Sudan:						
Adarama	Osman Digna . . .	450	350	1,000	. .	450
Gedaref.	Ahmed Fedil . . .	4,500	600	1,000	4	4,500
El Fasher	. . . .	1,000	200	500	. .	1,000
Asubri	Hamed Wad Ali . . .	900	400	1,400	. .	900
Gallabat	En Nur	50	. . .	200	. .	50
Dongola	Yunes ed Degheim .	2,400	500	5,000	8	2,400
Suarda	Hammuda	250	100	1,000	. .	250
Total	. . . .	34,350	6,600	64,000	75	40,350

pattern. Several of the Remington barrels, however, have been cut short with the object of lessening the weight, and with entire disregard to the altered trajectory thus occasioned. Of the sixty-four thousand swords and spear men, at least twenty-five per cent are either too old or too young to be considered effective for a campaign. The seventy-five guns comprise six Krupps of large calibre, and for which there is only a very small amount of ammunition, eight machine guns of various patterns, and sixty-one brass muzzle-loading guns of various shapes and sizes, the ammunition for which is manufactured principally in Omdurman, and is of a very inferior quality, the range being little over six or seven hundred yards.

Let us now consider for a few moments the present limits of the Khalifa's influence.

Until a few years ago, Dervish authority extended from near Wadi Halfa in a southeasterly direction towards Abu Hamed, thence eastwards to the Suakin neighbourhood, including Tokar and the Khor Baraka, thence in a southerly direction, including Kassala, Gallabat, and the southeastern slopes of the Beni Shangul and Gulli mountains, and from here it trended in a southwesterly direction towards the White Nile, and included Fashoda, Bohr, and Reggaf. On the west, it extended in a southwesterly direction through the southern Libyan desert, including Selima, the Dongola, Kordofan, and Darfur Provinces, up to the Wadai frontier, and thence southward across the Bahr el Arab through Dar Runga, and included Dar Fertit, the Bahr el Ghazal, and a portion of Equatoria.

The defeat of Nejumi obliged the Mahdists to

evacuate the northern portion of the Dongola Province; and their most northerly outpost is now Suarda, some three days' march from Dongola. The Egyptian victories at Tokar and Handub gave back to the local tribes the districts in the immediate neighbourhood of Suakin and Tokar, whilst the capture of Kassala threw into the hands of the Italians all districts lying east of that town, in consequence of which the river Atbara may now be considered the Khalifa's eastern frontier. The main force originally stationed at Gallabat under Ahmed Fedil has been moved to Gedaref, and only an insignificant force is maintained at the former station. The chief of the Beni Shangul districts—Tur el Guri—and many of the neighbouring Sheikhs have declared themselves independent.

In the extreme west, the Massalit, Tama, Beni Hussein, and Gimr tribes, who formerly paid tribute, have now revolted against the Mahdi's government, and until lately were independent. They entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with Sultan Yusef of Wadai; and the Khalifa was about to despatch an expedition with the object of bringing them into subjection, when the alarming news, to which I have already referred, regarding the appearance of Europeans in the Bahr el Ghazal induced him to alter the destination of Khatem Musa's force to that neighbourhood. After the retirement of the Dervishes, orders were sent to Khatem Musa not to proceed further south until he had received reinforcements from Omdurman.

The Shilluks and Dinkas were, as I have already stated, reduced to subjection by Zeki Tummal, and the route opened to Reggaf, which continues to be the most

southerly of the Dervish garrisons; in consequence of the disquieting news of European movements in these districts, the strength of the force there is by no means inconsiderable. The Khalifa's object in retaining these districts is to replenish his supplies of slaves and ivory; and, under the energetic command of Arabi Wad Dafalla, frequent expeditions are despatched south and west, some of which have collided with the forces of the Congo Free State; but, as I quitted the Sudan before the result of these expeditions was known, I am not in a position to state which side was victorious.

The Khalifa's revenue and expenditure is worked entirely on the Beit el Mal system.

The following are the principal:—

Beit el Mal el Umumi (General Treasury).
Beit el Mal el Mulazemin (the Mulazemin Treasury).
Beit el Mal Khums el Khalifa (or the Treasury of the Khalifa's fifth tithes).
Beit el Mal Warshat el Harbia (Treasury of the War Department).
Beit el Mal Zabtia es Suk (Treasury of the Bazaar Police).

The following are the sources of revenue of the General Treasury, viz.:—

1. The "Zeka" and "fitra" as laid down in the Moslem Law.
2. Confiscated property.
3. The ushr (or tenth) tax paid by merchants and traders on goods.
4. The gum-tax.
5. The boat-tax.
6. Loans from merchants (which are never repaid).
7. The ferry or "meshra" tax (*i.e.* the farming out of ferries).
8. The produce of all lands on the east of the Blue Nile

and the west of the White Nile, as far south as Kaikoj and Fashoda, and as far north as Haggar el Asal.

9. A percentage of the revenues of the principal Beit el Mals.

The following are the main expenses borne by the Treasury:—

1. Transport of troops and supplies to the different provinces.
2. Pay of the troops (Jehadia).
3. Pay of the various officials.
4. Alms.

The revenues of the Mulazemin Treasury come from the Gezira lands; and the main item of expenditure is the pay of the mulazemin.

The revenues of the Treasury of the Khalifa's fifth tithes are:—

1. The greater part of the balance revenues of the Provincial Treasuries.
2. The revenues of all islands, including Tuti Island, and all "Ghenima" lands, including the Halfaya and Kemlin districts, which formerly belonged to His Highness, the Khedive.
3. The ushr on all goods coming from Berber to Omdurman.
4. All slaves sent from the provinces.
5. Revenues of the majority of steamers and boats.

The expenditure of this Treasury is devoted to the Khalifa's household.

The War Department Revenues are:—

1. The produce of the Khartum gardens.
2. The revenue of some "sakias" (water-wheels) in the vincinity of Khartum.
3. Ivory from Equatoria.

Expenditure:—

1. Dockyard expenses.
2. Beit el Amana (arsenal) expenses.
3. Saltpetre refining.
4. Expenses in connection with the manufacture of arms and ammunition.

Revenue of the Police Treasury:—

1. Confiscated property of drunkards and gamblers.
2. Shop-tax.

Expenditure:—

1. Pay of police officers and men.
2. Expenses connected with Yakub's guest-house.
3. Expenses in connection with the building of the great wall.

It will be readily understood, that the above system produces a considerable revenue for the Khalifa's private treasury; and I know that a very large sum of money has been hoarded by him, and is stored in ammunition boxes, kept in his house; but I am unable to state, even approximately, what the amount may be. He has also several boxes, made of skins in which are quantities of gold and silver ornaments, collected from all parts.

As I have stated, a show is made of keeping correct accounts; but the system in vogue admits of endless peculation, and any persons having business in the Beit el Mal invariably acquire considerable fortunes. The Khalifa, however, is aware of this, and makes up for it by wholesale confiscations of property.

When the Mahdi first acquired possession of the Sudan, he naturally obtained considerable quantities of gold and silver money; and, with the assistance of Ahmed Wad Suleiman, he began to make his own coinage: he struck gold sovereigns which resembled the

Egyptian sovereign; but, as he did not understand the exact amount of alloy which should be mixed with the gold, the weights and values varied considerably, and, as the amount of gold in the Sudan was small, the coining of sovereigns had soon to be suspended. Silver coining was then carried on with some vigour; and the following table, showing the various descriptions of dollars coined during the last ten years, is an interesting indication of the decline of Dervish power and government; for instance, the first dollar coined by the Mahdi was made up of seven parts silver and one part copper, whereas, the last dollar, coined by the Khalifa about a year ago, is composed of two parts silver and five parts copper,—indeed, the present dollar is merely a heavy copper coin covered over with a thin layer of silver.

	Weight in Dirhems.	
	Silver.	Copper.
1. The Mahdi dollar	7	1
2. The first dollar made by Ibrahim Adlan	6	2
3. The second dollar made by Ibrahim Adlan	5	3
4. The first dollar of Nur el Gereifawi (this is known as the Makbul dollar)	4	4
5. The second dollar of Nur el Gereifawi (this is known as the Abu Sidr or Makbul)	3	4
6. The dollar of Suleiman Abdulla (this is known as the Abu Kibs or "crossed-spear" dollar)	2 1/2	4 1/2
7. The first dollar of Abdel Mejid (also called the Makbul)	2 1/2	4 1/2
8. The dollar of Weki Alla	2 1/2	4 1/2
9. The dollar of Omla Gedida (new money)	2	5

Coining money is a lucrative trade; and, at present, the Mint is presided over by two individuals, who pay six thousand dollars a month each, for the privilege. All money issued by them must be accepted as good money. The merchants, of course, object most strongly to these arbitrary measures; but wholesale confiscation of their property, accompanied by flogging and imprisonment, has forced them to realise the futility of attempting to go contrary to the Khalifa's will. Maria Theresa dollars and Medjidi dollars were the principal currency when the Egyptian Government occupied the Sudan; and the present rate of exchange is:—

One Maria Theresa dollar = five Omla Gedida dollars.
One Medjidi dollar = eight Omla Gedida dollars.

In consequence of this introduction of base coinage, the prices of certain articles have risen enormously: for instance, blue cotton stuff, which is principally used for women's dresses, and which cost formerly three-quarters of a dollar the piece, has now risen to six dollars, whilst ordinary linen, which was sold at a dollar for twelve yards, has risen to eight dollars for the same amount. Half a pound of sugar costs a dollar, and so on. In fact, all goods which come from Egypt have risen in price, whilst local produce, such as grain and cattle, has proportionately diminished in value: for instance,—

		Dervish Dollars.
A baggage camel	costs from	60 to 80
Riding camel	,, ,,	200 ,, 400
Abyssinian horse	,, ,,	60 ,, 120
Country bred horse	,, ,,	200 ,, 600
Ordinary cow	,, ,,	100 ,, 160

	Dervish Dollars.	
A calf	30	50
Milch cow . . .	100	120
A sheep	5	20
An ardeb of dhurra	6	8
An ardeb of wheat	30	40

If the above rates were calculated in the former currency, it will be seen that the price of these articles is less now than it was in the days of the Egyptian Government; and it is evident that this state of things is brought about by bad sales, depression of trade, and general poverty. The unfortunate natives, who, at most, own only a few acres of ground, and a small stock of domestic animals, are obliged to sell them in order to obtain the bare necessaries of life, and pay the oppressive taxes.

CHAPTER XVII.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS (*continued*).

Administration of Justice.—The Kadi el Islam.—Religion in the Sudan.—The Khalifa's Sermons.—Enforced Pilgrimage to the Mahdi's Tomb.—Limits of the Mahdist Empire.—Natural Produce.—Caravan Roads.—Ostrich Hunting.—Trade and Commerce.—The Slave-trade.—The Slave Market.—Industries.—Immorality.—Unpopularity of the Khalifa.—His Ignorance and Cruelty.—His private Apartments.—Principal Buildings in Omdurman.—Description of the City.—The Prison and its Horrors.—Death of Zeki Tummal and Kadi Ahmed.

THROUGHOUT the preceding pages, I have frequently referred in general terms to the Khalifa's system of administering justice. The Kadis, or judges, are ready tools in the hands of their astute master. They are only permitted to act independently in trivial cases, such as family disputes, questions of property, and the like; but in all matters of importance, they must invariably refer to the Khalifa for final decision, in giving which the latter invariably consults his own immediate interests; but at the same time his earnest endeavour is to appear before the public to be within the bounds of justice. The judges therefore, have a somewhat difficult task to perform: that is to say, they must invariably carry out the Khalifa's wishes, and give them the appearance of being legally correct; whereas, in nine cases out of ten, they

are entirely contrary to the first elements of justice and right.

The nominal codes of justice are the Moslem religious law and the "Instructions" of the Mahdi,—the latter being supposed to regenerate the former, which, through abuse and corruption, had been misapplied and, metaphorically speaking, trodden under foot. The main principle governing the "Instructions" is the necessity for absolute belief in the Mahdi's Divine mission,—to doubt this is considered an act of apostasy punishable by death, confiscation of property, or imprisonment for life. The Khalifa's object being to seize all power, the "Instructions" are applied on every possible occasion; and he generally takes council with Yakub as to the means to be employed to secure his end; and as Yakub is the embodiment of every description of base intrigue and violence, the application of these laws results in the grossest injustice, oppression, and brutality.

The following comprise the Court of Justice of the two principal Kadis; Hussein Wad Sahra, Jaali; Suleiman Wad el Hejaz, Gehemabi; Hussein Wad Gisu, Homri; Ahmed Wad Hamdan, Arakini; Osman Wad Ahmed, Batahini; and Abdel Kader Wad Om Mariam, who was formerly Kadi of Kalakla and Prefect of Khartum; also Mohammed Wad el Mufti, who is the judge of petty disputes amongst the mulazemin. In addition to these, there are several Kadis of the western tribes; but they are not permitted to give judgment, and merely give their votes to their higher colleagues.

Hussein Wad Sahra, whom the Khalifa recently appointed to succeed the Kadi el Islam, Ahmed Wad Ali, completed his studies at the Azhar Mosque in Cairo, and

is known as the most learned man in the Sudan. In spite, however, of his erudition, he made the fatal mistake of writing a small pamphlet in favour of the claims of Mohammed Ahmed to be the true Mahdi; and, having realised his error, he inwardly became his most bitter antagonist. Having now been summoned by the Khalifa to fill this important position, he was unwillingly obliged to accept it; his sense of justice has occasionally got the better of his fear, and, in several instances, he has given just judgments contrary to the Khalifa's wishes; consequently, he is not at present in favour with his master. He still nominally holds the post, but is seldom called to the councils. If fear of his life does not eventually get the upper hand, he will undoubtedly be shortly numbered amongst those who are to be got rid of.

Whenever the grand Council of Kadis assembles, it is always understood that they are about to pronounce some special judgment in accordance with the Khalifa's wishes, which have been previously communicated to them. As a Kadi's salary is not large,—from twenty to forty Dervish dollars a month,—it may be readily understood that venality enters largely into the minor judgments with which the Khalifa does not interfere.

In accordance with the "Instructions," the evidence of witnesses is inviolable: it is not permitted to the accused to protest; and, consequently, it is the judges' prerogative to accept or refuse witnesses at will, and such a system naturally gives them ample opportunities of increasing their incomes.

The Kadi of the Mulazemin has special instructions that any case between one of the body-guard and natives of the country—even if they be the highest in

the land—shall invariably be given in favour of the former; and so rigorously is this rule enforced, that it is now never thought worth while to enter into a lawsuit with one of the body-guard.

Attached to the Beit el Mal are two Kadis whose special duty is to keep up connection with the Mehekema (Law Courts); they also issue the papers which must be signed when slaves are bought and sold, and on which they collect a small tax. There are also Kadis in the market, police stations, and at the ferries who are charged with settling disputes and carrying out the duties of the Court of Small Causes.

The following brief notes on the state of religion, education, agriculture, commerce, and slave-trade may be of some interest.

Religion in the Sudan, as far as my experience goes, is governed by the principle that the end justifies the means. Proclamations and pamphlets enjoining strict attention to the performance of religious duties, and urging the abandonment of all earthly pleasures, are despatched to the remotest parts of Africa and Arabia, to Bornu, Dar Fellata, Mecca, and Medina. The Khalifa, if his health permits it, attends the five daily prayers most regularly; and yet, at heart, no man could be more irreligious. During all the years in which I have been in the closest communication with him, I have never once seen or heard him say a prayer in his own house. Should any religious rite or ceremony interfere in the smallest degree with his wishes or ambitions, it is instantly abolished; but in doing so he is careful that the proposition for its abolition should emanate in the first instance from his Kadis, who declare it necessary for

the "maintenance of the faith;" and the astuteness with which these obsequious myrmidons twist and turn matters in order to suit the Khalifa's will is deserving of a better cause. Whenever it is quite impossible to create some pretext for the execution of an unusually gross piece of injustice, Divine interposition and inspiration is invariably called to the rescue.

Abdullahi often addresses his followers from the pulpit in the mosque; but as he is entirely ignorant of theology, and knows little or nothing about the rudiments of religion, the scope of his sermons is excessively limited, and consists of a repetition of stereotyped phrases. On first mounting the pulpit, he greets the multitude with the words, "Salam Aleikum ya ashab el Mahdi!" (Peace be upon you, O friends of the Mahdi!). To this the congregation shout in one voice, "Aleik es Salam ya Khalifat el Mahdi!" (Peace be with thee, O Khalifa of the Mahdi!). The Khalifa then adds, "God bless you! God preserve you! May God lead the Mahdi's followers to victory!" and between each sentence the congregation shout, "Amin" (Amen).

He then goes on to say, "See, O friends of the Mahdi, how evil is the world! Think for how short a time we live in it! Were it not so the Prophet and his follower, the Mahdi, would still be with us. We shall surely follow them. Prepare, therefore, for your journey to the next world. Do not seek earthly joys; say the five prayers daily. Read the Mahdi's Rateb; and be ever ready to fight against the unbelievers. Obey my orders [this sentence he frequently repeats], and the joys of Paradise will be yours. Those who are disobedient and do not take heed of my words, are lost; for them,

as for the unbeliever, eternal damnation and hell fire is prepared. I am the shepherd, and you are the sheep. As you tend your cattle and see that they do not eat what will harm them, so I watch over you and see that you do not get into evil ways. Think always of the Almightiness of God. Think of the cow, which is made of flesh and blood and skin and bones; and yet you can obtain sweet white milk from her. Do you not recognise God's power in this?* Remain faithful to your vows to the Mahdi and to myself. Obey my commands, which will give you peace on earth and joy in the world to come. As the stones of a building go to make the structure complete, so should you support one another. Forgive one another. Love each other as the sons of one mother [and the crowd shouts, "We forgive each other!"]. May God bless you! May He lead you to victory! May He ever preserve and keep you! Depart now in peace; but, before we separate, shout in one voice, 'La Illaha ilalaha Mohammed Rasul Allah.' This will enlighten your hearts and strengthen your faith." The congregation then disperses with loud shouts of "Amin, la illaha, etc." All his sermons vary very little from the above.

The repetition of the five prayers, and the reading of the Kuran, on which no commentaries are permitted to be made, make up the sum total of religion, interspersed now and then with the reading of the Mahdi's instructions and the repetition, twice a day, of the Rateb. If any person says prayers at home, instead of at the mosque, without just cause or reason, he is adjudged

* The Khalifa, being a Baggari, or cattle-owning Arab, frequently draws similes of this description.

by the Khalifa as "disobedient;" and such prayers are, he says, not acceptable to God. From his point of view, true religion consists of servile obedience to his commands; and by this means alone can the soul enter into everlasting joys.

He has forbidden pilgrimage to Mecca, having substituted for it pilgrimage to the tomb of the Mahdi, who is the Prophet's representative. Although the Sudanese intensely dislike this innovation, they are perforce obliged to accept it; and as it is now impossible for them to return to the orthodox faith, which they so unwittingly cast aside, they now accept the situation, and carry out their mock religious duties in the most business-like manner, but without the smallest belief in their efficacy.

Education and religious instruction are practically non-existent. Some boys, and occasionally a few girls, are taught to recite the Kuran and the Rateb in the mesjids (religious schools attached to the mosques), of which a few are allowed to be privately kept up. A small percentage of these children, when they have completed their course in the mesjids, are sent to the Beit el Mal, where they become apprentices to the old Government clerks, and learn a certain amount of business correspondence. The system of theological instruction which obtains in most Moslem countries, but which was never much in vogue in the Sudan, has now ceased to exist altogether.

Cultivation of the land south of Berber is carried on during the rainy season, which in the northern districts begins in July, and in the southern at the end of May, or early in June, and lasts till the end of October; but

there are now immense tracts of once fertile soil which, through want of cultivation and depopulation, have become tracts of desert or a tangled wilderness. The staple grain of the Sudan is dhurra, and if there is a plentiful rainfall, the supply is generally good; but if there is a scarcity of rain, a famine almost invariably ensues, and the poorer classes of the population undergo terrible privations. On these occasions, they generally have to proceed to Karkoj on the Blue Nile, or some distance up the White Nile, and bring dhurra to Omdurman in boats.

From Wadi Halfa to Fashoda on the White Nile, or to Famaka on the Blue Nile, narrow strips of river bank are cultivated by sakias (water-wheels) or shadufs (hand-buckets); and, in addition to dhurra, Turkish maize, beans, lentils, peas, and pumpkins are cultivated. Owners of water-wheels in the vicinity of the larger towns cultivate small quantities of sugar-cane, watermelons, radishes, sweet cucumbers, and various kinds of vegetables, which find a ready market; and when the rainy season is over cotton is planted. The most productive land is, of course, on the islands, which, during high Nile, are often completely submerged; and as the river sinks they are sown almost without labour, and produce excellent crops. Oranges and lemons are grown in the neighbourhood of Khartum; but they are very small, and contain little juice. A few pomegranates, grapes, and figs are also to be had; but they are all of a very inferior quality. There are, of course, quantities of date-palms, of which the fruit forms one of the principal items of food; but the supply is barely sufficient for the consumption. In the Dar Mahass and Sukkot districts of the Dongola Province

the supply of dates is very considerable; and they are brought from thence to various parts of the Sudan, the drying process being carried on principally in the Berber and Robatab districts.

Gum-arabic is collected in the forests of Southern Kordofan, and at one time constituted the principal wealth of this province. It was gathered principally by the Gimeh and Gowama Arabs; but the former have been forced to emigrate, and the latter, through constant tyranny and oppression, have been so reduced that scarcely a sixth remains of their original numbers. In the days of the Egyptian Government, from eight hundred thousand to one million kantars of gum-arabic were gathered annually; but at present at most thirty thousand kantars are produced, and were it not that one of the former chiefs of the Beit el Mal had represented to the Khalifa the increase which would accrue to his private treasury by allowing the collection of gum, it is probable the custom of gum picking would have fallen into entire disuse.

The cultivation of tobacco was formerly one of the principal pursuits of the native population; but as smoking is strictly prohibited by the Mahdist code, this product has entirely died out, though occasionally small quantities are smuggled in from the Tagalla and Nuba mountains, and fetch large prices; but any persons guilty of infringing the regulations in this respect suffer very heavy penalties.

The once extensive commerce of the Sudan has now sunk down to comparatively nothing; and the roads which were formerly traversed by numberless caravans

are now deserted, obliterated by sand, or overgrown with rank vegetation. The principal routes were,—

1. The Arbaïn or forty days' road, from Darfur to Assiut, or from Kordofan through the Bayuda desert to Dongola, and Wadi Halfa.

2. From Khartum, *via* Berber, to Assuan, or *via* Abu Hamed, to Korosko.

3. From Khartum, *via* Berber or Kassala, to Suakin.

4. From Gallabat, Gedaref, and Kassala to Massawa.

At present the only roads used by occasional caravans are from Berber to Assuan and Suakin. Shortly after the capture of Khartum, the Sudan merchants imported to Assuan considerable quantities of the captured gold and silver ornaments; and, partly owing to this fact, and partly to the amount of spoil accumulated in the Khalifa's private treasury, the supply of these metals has become so reduced that Abdullahi has given strict orders to the merchants that they should on no account take with them to Egypt any gold or silver except what was absolutely necessary for the expenses of the journey. This amount was fixed by the Beit el Mal, and had to be taken in old currency, the value of which was inserted in the passport.

As the sadly diminished trade with Egypt began to revive, natural products, which had been the former wealth of the Sudan, were again made the medium of commerce. Gum, ostrich feathers, tamarinds, senna-leaves, etc. were collected in the Beit el Mal, as well as ivory, and were sold by auction at local currency rates; but as the majority of these products came from the western districts, which, owing to war, famine, and disease had become almost depopulated, the supply was

scanty. In exchange for these, the merchants brought from Egypt Manchester goods, which are greatly in demand in the Sudan. Gum is a monopoly, and the price paid for it varies greatly. The Beit el Mal purchases at the rate of twenty to thirty dollars (Omla Gedida), and sells to the merchants at the rate of thirty to forty dollars. The purchaser generally receives permission to take it to Egypt, and is taxed at the rate of a dollar a hundred weight at Berber, where the amount is carefully checked with the bill of lading. If he wishes to take it to Suakin or Assuan, he is obliged to pay a tax of a further dollar a hundred weight; but in this case it is a Maria Theresa dollar, which is equivalent to five Omla Gedidas; and thus already a sixth of the original cost has been added in taxation.

Ostrich-hunting has now become almost impossible, as the Arabs have practically no guns, and it is most difficult to procure any ammunition. An attempt was made to hunt ostriches on horseback; but this also was forbidden by the Khalifa, and, consequently, very few feathers are brought into the market. The Arabs then tried ostrich-breeding, and caught some young birds; but this again was forbidden on the grounds that it was not allowed by religion, and the plucking of birds was made an offence which was most severely punished. The Khalifa's object in imposing these absurd strictures was merely to appear in the eyes of the public as a very religious Moslem. In consequence, ostrich-breeders had no other course but to kill their birds, and for some days Omdurman was flooded with ostrich meat. I have heard that attempts are made by some of the desert Arabs to rear ostriches in a species of cage made

of the branches of trees; but the feathers obtained in this way are so few as to make the trade in this commodity almost unappreciable.

Ivory comes from the Equatorial regions in considerable quantities about once a year, and generally finds its way to Suakin; and as these districts appear to be gradually passing out of Mahdist control, it is hardly probable that the amount will increase in future years. Occasionally, a few tusks are brought from the Southern Darfur districts; but unless the Dervishes re-occupy the Bahr el Ghazal in force, their ivory trade stands in danger of dying out altogether.

Goods can only be imported from Egypt by the Assuan and Suakin roads. Formerly, a certain amount of trade was carried on between Suakin and Kassala, and Kassala and Massawa; but since the occupation of the Eastern Sudan by the Italians, it has almost entirely ceased. The goods imported are generally of an inferior quality, and consist mostly of material for women's dresses and men's jibbas; but to the inhabitants of the Sudan this is a matter of little consequence, for they much prefer gaudy and tawdry material to the more durable fabrics. Indeed, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to find purchasers for a better class of goods in the Sudan.

One of the principal imports is scent of every variety, such as sandal-wood oil, cloves, scented seeds, etc., for all of which the Sudanese ladies have a strong predilection. A certain amount of sugar, rice, inferior jams, and dried fruit also find purchasers amongst the more wealthy of the population. The importation of all articles made of iron, brass, tin, copper, etc. has, for

some time past, been rigorously prohibited by the Egyptian Government, and now it is almost impossible to obtain a pair of scissors or a razor. Copper cooking-utensils have risen to an enormous price; and most of those which previously existed have been bought up by the arsenal for the manufacture of cartridges. Consequently, food is now cooked almost entirely in earthenware vessels.

The tax of ushr (a tenth) is levied on all goods imported to the Sudan. It must be paid in either money or kind, and is frequently taken more than once along the road. All goods on arrival in Omdurman are taken to the Beit el Mal and stamped; and here the ushr is again taken. Merchants, therefore, owing to the heavy taxes imposed, in addition to the presents they have to make to the various chiefs, have generally paid half as much again over and above the value of their goods. They are therefore obliged to considerably raise the price; and even then the total profit is by no means a large one. Several of the more wealthy inhabitants of the Sudan have taken to trading with Egypt, not so much with a view to making money, as to spending a few months away from the atmosphere of the Khalifa's authority. It is by means of trade alone that any of the unfortunate inhabitants of the Sudan can temporarily escape from the hands of that tyrant, whose rule is more detested than ever. Most of the merchants, having their wives, families, and relatives in the Sudan, are obliged eventually to return; and, were it not for these ties, I think that few men who have the chance of leaving the Sudan would ever return.

But if trade in general is in a state of depression,

there is one trade to which the advent of the Mahdi and Khalifa has given a great impulse. I refer, of course, to the slave-trade. As, however, the export of slaves to Egypt is strictly prohibited, this trade is confined entirely to the provinces under the Khalifa's control. In prohibiting the export of slaves, the Khalifa acts on the wise principle that he should not increase the power of his adversaries at his own expense. It is, of course, quite impossible for him to absolutely prevent slaves being taken occasionally to Egypt or Arabia; but the slave-caravans which were formerly sent from the Sudan have now almost completely stopped. A few years ago quantities of slaves were sent from Abyssinia by Abu Anga, and from Fashoda by Zeki Tummal, as well as from Darfur and the Nuba mountains by Osman Wad Adam, and were generally sold by public auction for the benefit of the Beit el Mal, or the Khalifa's private treasury. The transport of slaves is carried on with the same execrable and heartless cruelty which characterises their capture. Of the thousands of Abyssinian Christians seized by Abu Anga, the majority were women and children; and under the cruel lash of the whip they were forced to march on foot the whole distance from Abyssinia to Omdurman; wrenched from their families, provided with scarcely enough food to keep body and soul together, barefooted, and almost naked, they were driven through the country like herds of cattle. The greater number of them perished on the road; and those who arrived in Omdurman were in so pitiable a condition that purchasers could scarcely be found for them, whilst numbers were given away for nothing by he Khalifa. After the defeat of the Shilluks, Zeki

Tummal packed thousands of these wretched creatures into the small barges used for the transport of his troops, and despatched them to Omdurman. Hundreds died from suffocation and overcrowding on the journey; and, on the arrival of the remnant, the Khalifa appropriated most of the young men as recruits for his body-guard, whilst the women and young girls were sold by public auction, which lasted several days. Hungry, and in many cases naked, these unfortunate creatures lay huddled together in front of the Beit el Mal. For food, they were given an utterly inadequate quantity of uncooked dhurra. Hundreds fell ill; and for these poor wretches it was also impossible to find purchasers. Wearily they dragged their emaciated bodies to the river bank, where they died; and as nobody would take the trouble to bury them, the corpses were pushed into the river and swept away.

But a worse fate than this befell the slaves who had the misfortune to be sent from Darfur along the broad stretches of waterless desert which lie between that province and Omdurman. These miserable creatures were mercilessly driven forward day and night; and it would be impossible for me to describe here the execrable measures adopted by these brutal slave-drivers to force on their prey to their destination. When the poor wretches could go no further, their ears were cut off as a proof to the owner that his property had died on the road. Some of my friends told me that on one occasion they had found an unfortunate woman whose ears had been cut off, but who was still alive. Taking pity on her, they brought her to El Fasher, where she eventually

recovered, whilst her ears had been duly exposed in Omdurman as proof of her death.

Latterly, no large caravans of slaves have arrived in Omdurman, because the majority of the slave-producing districts, such as Darfur, have become depopulated, or, in some cases, the tribes, such as the Tama, Massalit, etc., have thrown off allegiance to the Khalifa. Consignments, however, still come from Reggaf; but, owing to the long and tedious journey, numbers of them perish on the way. As the supplies from Gallabat, Kordofan, and Darfur have considerably diminished, the Khalifa now allows the Emirs to sell slaves to the itinerant Gellabas; and the latter are obliged to sign a paper giving a descriptive return of their purchase, and the amount paid. They are permitted to re-sell on the same conditions.

There is of course a daily sale of slaves in Omdurman; but the purchase of male slaves is forbidden, as they are looked upon as the Khalifa's monopoly, and are generally turned into soldiers. Anyone wishing to dispose of a male slave must send him to the Beit el Mal, where a purely nominal price is paid for him; and he is then, if likely to make a good soldier, recruited for the mulazemin, but if unsuitable, he is sent off to work as a labourer in his master's fields. The sale of women and girls is permissible everywhere, with the proviso that a paper must be signed by two witnesses of the sale, one of whom, if possible, should be a Kadi, certifying that the slave sold is the actual property of the vendor. This system was brought into force because slaves frequently ran away from their

masters, were caught and sold by other persons as their own property, and thus theft of slaves was a very common practice in Omdurman. They were frequently enticed into other people's houses, or secretly induced to leave the fields, then thrown into chains and carried off to distant parts of the country, where they were sold at very low rates. In accordance with the Mohammedan Law, slaves cannot be witnesses; and, being well aware of their inferior position, these stolen creatures, as long as they are kindly treated, are not dissatisfied with their lot.

In Omdurman itself, in an open space a short distance to the southeast of the Beit el Mal, stands a house roughly built of mud-bricks, which is known as the Suk er Rekik (slave-market). Under the pretext that I wanted to buy or exchange slaves, I several times received the Khalifa's permission to visit it, and found ample opportunity for closely observing the conduct of the business. Here professional slave-dealers assemble to offer their wares for sale. Round the walls of the house numbers of women and girls stand or sit. They vary from the decrepit and aged half-clad slaves of the working-class, to the gaily-decked Surya (concubine); and as the trade is looked upon as a perfectly natural and lawful business, those put up for sale are carefully examined from head to foot, without the least restriction, just as if they were animals. The mouth is opened to see if the teeth are in good condition. The upper part of the body and the back are laid bare; and the arms carefully looked at. They are then told to take a few steps backward or forward in order that their movements and gait may be examined. A series of

questions are put to them to test their knowledge of Arabic. In fact, they have to submit to any examination the intending purchaser may wish to make. Suryas, of course, vary considerably in price; but the whole matter is treated by the slaves without the smallest concern. They consider it perfectly natural, and have no notion of being treated otherwise. Only occasionally one can see by the expression of a woman or girl that she feels this close scrutiny; possibly her position with her former master was rather that of a servant than a slave, or she may have been looked upon almost as a member of the family, and may have been brought to this unhappy position by force of circumstances, or through some hateful inhumanity on the part of her former master. When the intending purchaser has completed his scrutiny, he then refers to the dealer, asks him what he paid for her, or if he has any other better wares for sale. He will probably complain that her face is not pretty enough, that her body is not sufficiently developed, that she does not speak Arabic, and so on, with the object of reducing the price as much as possible; whilst, on the other hand, the owner will do his utmost to show up her good qualities, charms, etc., into the detail of which it is not necessary to enter here. Amongst the various "secret defects" which oblige the dealer to reduce his price are snoring, bad qualities of character, such as thieving, and many others; but when at last the sale has been finally arranged, the paper is drawn out and signed, the money paid, and the slave becomes the property of her new master. Payment is always made in local currency (Omla Gedida dollars), and runs ap proximately as follows:—

For an aged working slave, fifty to eighty dollars; for a middle aged woman eighty to one hundred and twenty dollars; for young girls between eight and eleven years of age, according to looks, one hundred and ten to one hundred and sixty dollars; and for suryas (concubines), according to looks, one hundred and eighty to seven hundred dollars. These rates, of course, vary also according to market value, or special demand for a particular race.

There are practically no industries in the Sudan, as, with the exception of the articles I have already mentioned, there are no exports. Formerly, gold and silver filigree work was sent to Egypt; but, owing to the scarcity of these metals, and to the Mahdi's edict against wearing jewellery, this export has altogether ceased. There is a considerable manufacture and trade in long and short spears of various shapes, stirrup-irons, horse and donkey bits, knives for fastening on the arm, as well as agricultural implements. Wooden saddles for horses, camels, and mules, angarebs, boxes for carrying clothes, and doors, windows, and shutters of a primitive description are also made. Formerly, boat-building was extensively carried on; but, owing to the Khalifa's confiscation of all boats on the Nile, it ceased almost entirely, till about a year ago, when, with the Khalifa's permission, it re-commenced. As, however, all new boats are taxed highly by the Beit el Mal, there is little inducement to the builders to undertake such profitless work.

There is a certain amount of leather-work in red and yellow shoes, sandals, saddles of different sorts, harness, amulets, sword scabbards, and knife sheaths, etc., whilst whips in large quantities are made from the hide of the

hippopotamus. There is also a considerable cotton industry. Every woman or girl spins for her own use or for sale; and in every village there are numbers of weavers who work the spun-yarn into a variety of materials. In the Gezira are woven common cotton stuffs, —such as tobs, damur, and genj (names of cloths) in lengths of about ten yards. These are brought to the market in large quantities, and are principally used for the clothing of the commoner classes. The finest yarns are spun in the province of Berber. Strips of coloured silk are frequently interwoven in the material, which is used principally for turbans and hazams (the strips of cotton which are used to bind round the body), as well as coverings of various sorts, and shawls. A certain amount of cotton stuff is made in the Dongola province; but that district is chiefly noted for the manufacture of sail-cloth. Materials from Kordofan are noted for their durability rather than for their beauty.

In addition to spinning, the women occupy themselves largely in plaiting mats of various shapes and sizes from the leaves of the dom palm, which are sold largely in all parts of the Sudan. The best quality of these mats is made from the narrow strips of the palm leaves, barley straw, and thin pieces of leather. Mats of a similar description are also made for placing under dishes on the dinner-table. The workmanship of some of these is so fine and good that a certain quantity find their way to Egypt, where they are sold as curiosities. The Darfur women are specially clever in making these mats, into which are interwoven various sorts of glass beads, and the result is sometimes extremely pretty.

In the preceding pages, I have endeavoured to give a brief outline of the Khalifa's life, and the existing state of affairs in the country; but this would not be complete without a few remarks regarding the moral condition of the people. The attempted regeneration of the faith by the Mahdi, who disregarded the former religious teaching and customs, has resulted in a deterioration of morals, which, even at the best of times, were very lax in the Sudan. Partly from fear of the Khalifa, and partly for their own personal interests and advantage, the people have made religion a mere profession; and this has now become their second nature, and has brought with it a condition of immorality which is almost indescribable. The majority of the inhabitants, unhappy and discontented with the existing state of affairs, and fearing that their personal freedom may become even more restricted than it is, seem to have determined to enjoy their life as much as their means will allow, and to lose no time about it. As there is practically no social life or spiritual intercourse, they seem to have resolved to make up for this want by indulging their passion for women to an abnormal extent. Their object is to obtain as many of these in marriage as possible, as well as concubines; and the Mahdi's tenets allow them the fullest scope in this direction. For instance, the expenses in connection with marriage have been greatly diminished. The dowry for a girl has been reduced from ten to five dollars; and for a widow, five dollars, a common dress, a pair of shoes or sandals, and a few scents. Should a man desire to marry a girl, her father or guardian must consent, unless there are

some very cogent reasons for not doing so. Under any circumstances, they are held responsible that their daughters or wards become wives as soon as they reach a convenient age. The acquisition, therefore, of four wives—which is the number authorised by the Kuran—has become a very simple matter, and in most cases is considered merely a means of acquiring a small amount of personal property. Moreover, a large proportion of the women are quite agreeable to this arrangement, and enter into matrimony either with the object of obtaining some clothes and a little money, or temporarily changing their mode of life, being well aware that, in accordance with the law, they can dissolve marriage ties without difficulty. If a woman seeks a divorce, she retains her dowry, unless the separation rises from aversion to her husband, in which case the dowry is returned if the man wishes it. I know many men who, in the space of ten years, have been married forty or fifty times at least; and there are also many women who, during the same period, have had fifteen or twenty husbands, and in their case the law enjoins that between each divorce they must wait three months at least. As a rule, concubines, of whom a man may legally have as many as he likes, lead a most immoral life. They rarely live in the same house as their master, unless they have children by him, in which case they cannot be sold; but in the majority of cases they are bought with the object of being retained merely for a very short time, and subsequently sold again at a profit. This constant changing of hands leads to great moral deterioration. Their youth and beauty quickly fade; and, as a rule, they age

prematurely, and then enter upon a life of hardship and moral degradation which it is almost impossible to conceive.

It is a common practice for merchants to make pecuniary profit out of the immorality of their slaves. They buy young girls, permit them to enjoy a certain amount of freedom by seeking a shelter and livelihood in the manner which suits them best; and for this privilege they refund to their masters a percentage of their gains.

The greatest vice exists amongst the slaves of the mulazemin. The latter entice women to their quarters, where they remain a short time with them as their wives; but the freest interchange takes place between them. The Khalifa does not seem to think it worth while to check this immorality, as he imagines that by allowing them to please themselves, his own slaves will become more attached to him, and will not wish to leave him. It may be readily conceived that the result of this moral laxity has led to the prevalence of the worst sort of disease, which has taken such a hold of all classes of the population, both free and slaves, that were it not for the warm and dry climate, the ravages would be terrible. As it is, the general state of health is very unsatisfactory, and is considerably aggravated by the complete absence of medicines necessary to check the malady.

A certain number of people also indulge in unnatural love: and at first the Khalifa made some attempt to check this by banishment to Reggaf; but latterly he has given up doing so. He has come to the conclusion that it is much easier to rule by despotism and tyranny,

a degraded nation than one which possesses a high standard of morality. For this reason, he both hates and fears the Jaalin, who inhabit the Nile banks between Hagger el Asal and Berber, because they are almost the only Arabs in the Sudan who maintain a well-regulated family life, and hold morality in high esteem as a necessary condition for a healthy and contented existence.

The widows of the Mahdi are forcibly prevented from leading a corrupt life; as, immediately after his master's death, the Khalifa, in honour of his memory, confined these women in houses surrounded by high walls, in the immediate vicinity of his tomb, where they are strictly guarded by eunuchs. Much against their will, not only the wives and concubines, but also many of the young girls,—most of whom were daughters of former Government officials, and who were taken into the harem when quite young, in order to become his future wives,—have been thus forcibly deprived of the possibility of re-marrying, and are so closely guarded that they are only permitted to see their female relatives once a year. They are supplied merely with the bare necessaries of life, and long for their freedom. Let us hope that before very long it may come!

In spite of his despotism, the Khalifa is in considerable fear of his life. He ruthlessly evicted all the local inhabitants of those portions of the town in the immediate neighbourhood of his own residence; and their places have been taken by his enormous body-guard, whose numbers he daily seeks to increase. These he has surrounded by an immense wall, within which he and his relatives live, while all persons of whom he is

in the slightest degree suspicious are forced to reside without the enclosure. Within, however, all is not peace and contentment. The constant duties he imposes on his body-guard have produced a feeling of irritation. They grumble at the small pay they receive, and do not appreciate the restrictions imposed on their social life. Thousands of these who belong to the free Arab tribes are prevented from having any intercourse whatever with their relations. They are scarcely ever permitted to quit the enclosure; and their smallest offences are punished with appalling severity. Abdullahi is surrounded day and night by his own specially appointed guard, and by numbers of faithful servants; and no persons—not even his nearest relatives—are permitted to approach him with arms in their hands. Should anyone be commanded to see the Khalifa, his sword and knife, which he invariably wears, are taken from him, and he is generally searched before being admitted to the audience-chamber. This general mistrust has added to his unpopularity; and, even amongst his most devoted adherents, remarks are frequently let fall in an undertone, commenting on his despotism and his personal fears.

In spite, however, of all this undue severity, the Khalifa has not succeeded in keeping his own tribe in hand. On their first arrival in the Nile valley, they indulged in wholesale raids on the local population, seizing their grain, ravishing their women, and carrying off their children. Indeed affairs became so serious that the Khalifa was obliged to issue an order that no Taaisha Arab would be permitted to leave the town without special permission; but his instructions were practically

ignored, and lawlessness is even more rife than before. The conduct of these Arabs is unbearable. They openly boast that their relationship with the Khalifa has made them masters of the country, and that they intend to assert themselves. They have seized all the best pastures for their cattle and horses; and they live on the fat of the land,—a state of affairs which has caused considerable jealousy amongst the other western tribes, who view the Taaisha with no very friendly feelings. Of all this the Khalifa is well aware; but I do not think he realises how unpopular he really is, and his constant effort is to retain the sympathy of his Emirs by frequently sending them secretly by night presents of money and slaves. The latter do not hesitate to accept these gifts, which they know have been unfairly gained; and their opinion of the Khalifa, instead of being improved, remains as it was before. He imagined that the learned and educated element of the population—which is exceedingly small—was on his side, because he allowed Kadi Hussein to give lectures in the mosque after noon and evening prayers on the subject of the Moslem rights of inheritance. As all such re-unions were forbidden by the Mahdi, some of the Ulema (learned men) were stupid enough to think that this new departure was a sign of progress. The Khalifa himself attended these lectures; and, noticing one day that some of the Ulema, in order to rest themselves, sat cross-legged instead of in a submissive attitude of prayer, he openly reprimanded them, and declared in a loud voice that all persons, whether learned or ignorant, must in his presence pay him the respect due to him. A few days later, Kadi Hussein inadvertently quoted in

his lecture a chapter to the effect that learning was a high virtue, and that kings and princes should realise this, and accept the advice of learned men. The Khalifa, who is utterly ignorant of reading and writing, got up and left the mosque in a rage; and, a few days later, he issued an order that the meetings should be discontinued for the future. Kadi Hussein immediately fell in favour, and soon afterwards had the further misfortune to disagree with the Khalifa on a question respecting slaves. The latter had called upon the Kadis for an opinion as to whether all male and female slaves who might have taken refuge with the mulazemin, and were not claimed by their rightful owners within twenty days, should not become the actual property of their new masters; but as no persons living outside the wall are under any circumstances permitted to enter the enclosure, it stands to reason that masters of runaway slaves have no possibility of searching the quarters of the mulazemin. On these grounds the Kadi suggested that runaway slaves should be publicly exposed in the market-place for a short time, and that if no one appeared to claim them within a specified period, they should then become the property of the Beit el Mal. As the Khalifa had previously given private instructions to his mulazemin to retain all slaves belonging to the Nile valley tribes, and to return only those who belonged to the western Arabs, the Kadi's proposition did not at all suit him, whilst the other Kadis, to whom he had referred the matter, concurred with him against Kadi Hussein. The friends of the latter now trembled for his life; but the Khalifa allowed it to pass for the moment, and is only waiting for some other opportunity to

involve him more deeply in what he is pleased to term "an act of disobedience."

The Khalifa has not moved out of Omdurman for upwards of ten years. Here he has centralised all power, stored up all ammunition, and gathered under his personal surveillance all those whom he suspects, obliging them to say the five prayers daily in his presence, and listen to his sermons. He has declared Omdurman to be the sacred city of the Mahdi. It is strange to think that ten years ago this great town was merely a little village lying opposite to Khartum, and inhabited by a few brigands. It was not for some time after the fall of Khartum that the Mahdi decided to settle there. Mimosa-trees filled up the space now occupied by the mosque and the residences of the three Khalifas. Abdullahi took as his own property all ground lying south of the mosque, whilst that on the north side was divided between Khalifa Sherif and Khalifa Ali Wad Helu. During his lifetime, the Mahdi had declared that Omdurman was merely a temporary camp, as the Prophet had revealed to him that he should depart this life in Syria, after conquering Egypt and Arabia; but his early death had shattered all his plans and the hopes of his followers.

From north to south, the new city covers a length of about six English miles. The southern extremity lies almost exactly opposite the southwest end of Khartum. At first, everyone wanted to live as near the river banks as possible, in order to facilitate the drawing of water, consequently the breadth of the city is considerably less than its length; and it is in no place over three miles in width. At first, it consisted of

thousands and thousands of straw huts; and the mosque was originally an oblong enclosure surrounded by a mud wall four hundred and sixty yards long and three hundred and fifty yards broad; but this has now been replaced by one made of burnt brick, and then whitewashed over. After this, the Khalifa began building brick houses for himself and his brother, then for his relatives, whilst the Emirs and most of the wealthy people followed his example. I have already described the construction of the Mahdi's tomb; but before I left Omdurman much of the whitewash had been knocked off by the weather, which spoilt its general appearance. Above the apex of the dome are three hollow brass balls, one above the other, connected together by a lance, the head of which forms the top ornament of the structure. I have often heard people say that the Khalifa erected this spear to show that he is perfectly prepared to declare war against the heavens if his wishes are not carried out. Occasionally Abdullahi shuts himself up for hours in this mausoleum, probably with the object of obtaining some special inspiration; but since the execution of the Mahdi's relatives, his visits are much less frequent; and it is generally supposed he dreads to be alone with the body of his dead master, whose tenets and influence he has, not in words but in deeds, so persistently overturned. Every Friday, the large doors in the surrounding enclosure are opened to admit the pilgrims; and as every Mahdist is ordered to attend on these days to repeat the prayers for the dead, thousands are to be seen in the various attitudes of prayer, beseeching the protection of the Almighty through the intermediary of the Saint (?) who lies buried

there; but I doubt not that many fervent prayers ascend to the throne of God for relief from the terrible oppression and tyranny of his despotic successor.

South of the tomb, and adjoining the great mosque, lies the enormous enclosure of the Khalifa. It consists of a high wall built of red bricks, which is subdivided into several smaller courts, all of which are in communication with each other; and nearest to the mosque are his own private apartments, to the east of which are those of his wives, the stables, store-houses, quarters of the eunuchs, etc., etc. In the centre of the eastern face of the mosque is a large wooden door (the other entrances to the mosque have no doors) through which admission is obtained to the Khalifa's private apartments and reception chambers. On entering the main gate, one passes through a sort of porch, leading into a small court, in which are two rooms, one side of each of which is left completely open; and it is here that the Khalifa receives his guests. A door leads out of this court into the private apartments; and the youthful attendants are the only persons allowed to enter. The various houses within the enclosure are constructed in the shape of large detached halls, on one or both sides of which are verandahs. On the roof of one of these buildings a second story has been added, on all four sides of which are windows, from which a complete view of the town can be obtained.

The reception chambers are furnished with the greatest simplicity. An angareb, over which a palm-mat is spread, is the only article of furniture; but his interior apartments are provided with all the luxuries it is possible to procure in the Sudan. Brass and iron

bedsteads with mosquito curtains,—the spoil of Khartum,—carpets, silk-covered cushions, door and window curtains of every variety of colour and texture, are the principal articles of furniture, while the verandahs are provided with the universal angareb and palm-mat. Compared with the Khalifa's early mode of life, these articles constitute the most extreme luxuries.

To the east of the Khalifa's enclosure lies the house of his son, which is furnished much in the same style as that of his father, but with even greater luxury. Several large brass chandeliers from Khartum are suspended from the ceilings; and there is an immense garden made from earth transported from the banks of the Nile, and in which hundreds of slaves are employed daily. The latter are justly irritated with the great love of show which is the distinguishing characteristic of their young master, whilst they themselves are provided with scarcely enough food for their maintenance.

The Khalifa and his son spend much of their time in building and furnishing new apartments, and in making their lives as pleasant and comfortable as possible. Yakub follows their example; and every day numbers of workmen are to be seen streaming towards these two houses, carrying beams, stone, mortar, and other requisite building-material. Khalifa Ali Wad Helu's house is very much smaller, and is furnished with great simplicity.

In addition to his principal residence, Abdullahi possesses houses in the northern and southern districts of the city; but they are built and furnished on much simpler lines, and are merely used by him as rest-houses when he despatches troops on expeditions from

the capital, or goes out to inspect freshly arrived detachments from the provinces. He seldom stays in these houses more than a day or two at a time. He has also built a house near the river, and close to the old Government fort, the ditches of which have now been filled in. He generally goes to this house when steamers are about to start for Reggaf, in order that he may personally superintend embarkations.

The Beit el Amana, or arsenal, is separated from Yakub's house by a broad open space. It consists of a large building enclosed by stone walls, and here are stored the guns, rifles, ammunition, and other warlike material, as well as the five carriages belonging to the Governor-Generals and to the Catholic Mission. At intervals of every few paces sentries are posted in small sentry boxes; and they are charged to allow no unauthorised persons to enter the building. Just north of the arsenal lies a building in which are stored the flags of all the Emirs residing in Omdurman; and beside it is a semi-circular building about twenty feet high, provided with stairs, where the Khalifa's war-drums are kept. A little further to the east is the cartridge and small-arms manufactory.

On the north side of the city, and close to the river, is the Beit el Mal, which is an enormous walled-in enclosure subdivided into a variety of courts in which are stored goods coming from all parts of the Sudan and from Egypt, as well as grain stores and slave courts. A little to the south of the Beit el Mal lies the public slave-market, and, in close proximity, the Beit el Mal of the Mulazemin has been erected.

The town of Omdurman is built for the most part

on fairly level ground, but here and there are a few small hills. The soil consists mostly of hard red clay, and is very stony, with occasional patches of sand. For his own convenience, the Khalifa has driven large straight roads through various parts of the town; and to make way for these numbers of houses were levelled, but no compensation was given to their owners. A glance at the rough plan attached to the end of the book will give the reader an approximate idea of the extent and general situation of the town and principal buildings, and its relative position with reference to Khartum, which is now a complete ruin, the dock-yard alone being kept up, and communication between it and Omdurman maintained by a submarine cable worked by some of the former Government telegraph officials. Outside the large unfinished wall built along the road leading to the Beit el Mal are a number of shops belonging to the various trades, all of which are kept quite distinct, —such as carpenters, barbers, tailors, butchers, etc., etc. The Mehekemet es Suk (market police) are charged with maintaining order in the town; and the gallows erected in various parts of the city are a very evident indication of the system of government of the country.

The population of the city is located entirely according to tribes. The western Arabs live for the most part in the southern quarters, whilst the northern portion has been allotted to the Nile valley people; and in addition to the market police, the various sections of the populace are obliged to supply a number of watchmen for the preservation of public security in their respective quarters, and they must report any disturbances to the night patrols.

With the exception of the few broad roads which the Khalifa has made for his own convenience, the only communications between the various quarters consist of numbers of narrow winding lanes; and in these all the filth of the city is collected. Their wretched condition, and the smells which emanate from these pestilential by-paths are beyond description. Dead horses, camels, donkeys, and goats block the way; and the foulest refuse lies scattered about. Before certain feast-days, the Khalifa issues orders that the city is to be cleaned; but, beyond sweeping all these carcases and refuse into corners, nothing further is done; and when the rainy season begins the fetid air exhaling from these decaying rubbish heaps generally produces some fatal epidemic, which sweeps off the inhabitants by hundreds.

Formerly, there were cemeteries within the city; but now all the dead must be buried in the desert north of the parade ground.

Fever and dysentery are the prevailing maladies in Omdurman, and between the months of November and March an almost continuous epidemic of typhus fever rages.

Of late years numbers of new wells have been made. Those north of the mosque give good water; but those in the southern quarters of the city are mostly brackish. They vary in depth from thirty to ninety feet, and are generally dug by the prisoners under the direction of the saier.

"He has been taken to the Saier," is an expression one frequently hears; and it means that some wretched creature has been carried off to the prison. The mere mention of this word awakens feelings of horror and

dread in the minds of all who hear it. The prison is situated in the southeastern quarter of the city, near the river, and is surrounded by a high wall. A gate, strongly guarded day and night by armed Blacks, gives access to an inner court, in which several small mud and stone huts have been erected. During the day-time, the unhappy prisoners, most of them heavily chained and manacled, lie about in the shade of the buildings. Complete silence prevails, broken only by the clanking of the chains, the hoarse orders of the hard-hearted warders, or the cries of some poor wretch who is being mercilessly flogged. Some of the prisoners who may have specially incurred the Khalifa's displeasure, are loaded with heavier chains and manacles than the rest, and are interned in the small huts and debarred from all intercourse with their fellow-prisoners. They generally receive only sufficient nourishment to keep them alive.

Ordinary prisoners receive no regular supply of food; but their relatives are allowed to provide for them. It often happens that long before a meal reaches the person for whom it is intended, a very large portion of it has been consumed by the rapacious and unscrupulous warders; and sometimes the prisoner gets nothing whatever. At night, the wretched creatures are driven like sheep into the stone huts, which are not provided with windows, and are consequently quite unventilated. Regardless of prayers and entreaties, they are pushed pell-mell into these living graves, which are generally so tightly packed that it is quite impossible to lie down. The weaker are trampled down by the stronger; and not infrequently the warder opens the door in the morning to find that some of his victims have succumbed to

suffocation and ill-usage in these horrible cells. It is a painful sight to see scores of half-suffocated individuals pouring out of these dens, bathed in perspiration, and utterly exhausted by the turmoil of the long and sleepless night. Once emerged, they sink down, more dead than alive, under the shade of the walls, and spend the remainder of the day in trying to recover from the effects of the previous night, and gain sufficient strength to undergo the horrors of that which is to follow.

One would think that death was preferable to such an existence. Still these unfortunates cling to life, and pray to God to relieve them from their sufferings. In spite of the prison being invariably overcrowded, and notwithstanding the horrors of prison life, I do not ever remember having heard of a case of suicide amongst the unfortunate inmates.

Charles Neufeld has spent some years in the Saier, often ill, subject to the greatest privations, and merely kept alive by the occasional supplies which reached him through the Black servant he brought with him from Egypt, and who, in turn, was assisted by the other Europeans in Omdurman. He managed to survive, though heavily chained by the neck, and wearing two large irons round his feet. On one occasion, he refused to spend the night in one of the stone huts, which he aptly described as "the last station on the way to Hell," and for this act of disobedience he was severely flogged; but he bore it without a murmur, until his tormentors—amazed at his powers of endurance—cried out, "Why do you not complain? Why do you not ask for mercy?" "That is for others to do, not for me," was the stronghearted reply which gained for him the respect of even

his gaolers. After enduring three years of imprisonment, his irons were lightened; and, with only a chain joining his ankles, he was removed to Khartum, where he was ordered to refine saltpetre for the manufacture of gunpowder, under the superintendence of Wad Hamednalla. Here his condition was much improved; and he received a small monthly remuneration for his work, which sufficed to provide him with the bare necessaries of life. As the saltpetre refinery adjoins the old church of the Mission, the latter has thus been saved from destruction. After his daily hard work is over, Neufeld is allowed to rest in the Mission gardens; and here, no doubt, his thoughts often revert to his family at home, and he must in his heart curse the evil day which induced him to quit Egypt, and thoughtlessly venture into the clutches of the Khalifa. For him fate has indeed been cruel; and most fervently do I hope that ere long he may be reunited with his relatives, who have not abandoned all hope of seeing him again. In Europe, there is no lack of friends who are ready to do all in their power to help him; but it rests with God alone to release this poor captive from his misery.

It makes my heart ache to think of all the horrors that have been enacted in that dreadful prison. There was the sad case of poor Sheikh Khalil, who had been despatched from Cairo with letters to the Khalifa, informing him of the number and names of the prisoners who had been captured at the battle of Toski, all of whom, he was assured, were being well cared for, and would eventually be set free; and he was requested to hand over to the Sheikh the sword and medals of General Gordon, which, it was assumed, were in his

possession. Khalil's companion, Beshara, was sent back with the letters unanswered, whilst the unfortunate emissary, who was an Egyptian by birth, was thrown into chains, under the pretext that he had been sent as a spy. Ill-treated and deprived of nourishment, he became so weak that he could not rise from the ground. His tormentors even refused him water to drink; and at last death came to him as a happy release from his sufferings.

Malech, a Jewish merchant of Tunis, who had come to Kassala with Abu Girga's permission, was seized by the Khalifa's orders, and brought to Omdurman, where he remains in captivity in the Saier to this day. He is as thin as a skeleton, and is driven almost to despair. He is kept alive by the efforts of his own community, who have been forced to become Moslems, and who succeed in providing him with small quantities of food.

Two Ababda Arabs, arrested on suspicion of carrying letters to Europeans in Omdurman, were seized and imprisoned, and died soon after of starvation. The alarm in the European colony was great; but fortunately it transpired that the letters were for a Copt from his relations in Cairo.

The great Sheikh of the Gimeh tribe, Asakr Abu Kalam, who had shown such friendship and hospitality to the Khalifa and his father in early days, was ruthlessly seized and thrown into chains, because it came to the Khalifa's ears that he had spoken disparagingly of the present condition of the Sudan, and had expressed regret at having taken up arms against the Government. He was eventually exiled to Reggaf, whilst his wife, who was a well-known beauty in the Sudan, was torn from

the arms of her husband at the hour of his departure, and carried off to the Khalifa's harem.

The well-known Emir, Zeki Tummal, on being seized, was thrown into a small stone building the shape of a coffin, the door of which was built up. He was given no food whatever; but a small amount of water was handed to him through an aperture in the wall. For twenty-three days, he suffered all the horrors of starvation; but no sound or complaint was heard to issue from that living grave. Too proud to beg, and well aware of the futility of doing so, he lingered on till the twenty-fourth day, when death carried him out of reach of his tormentors. The saier and his warders watched, through the aperture, the death agonies of the wretched man; and when at length he had ceased to struggle, they hurried off to give their lord and master the joyful news. That night Zeki's body was removed to the western quarter of the city, and there buried amongst a heap of old ruins, with his back turned towards Mecca.* The Khalifa, not content with having tormented him in life, thought thus to deprive him of peace in the world to come.

I have already described how the Khalifa disposed of his most trusted adherent, the Kadi Ahmed. On reaching the Saier, he was thrown into the hut in which Zeki had been interned; and, a few days after, he was visited, at the command of the Khalifa, by two other Kadis, who asked where he had hidden his money. "Tell your master, the Khalifa," said he, "that I have settled my account with this world; and I know of no place where gold or silver can be found." To their

* All true Moslems are buried facing Mecca.

further inquiries he remained perfectly silent; and the two myrmidons returned, crestfallen, to their master. This happened only a few days before I quitted Omdurman. Since my return to Egypt, I have ascertained that he died shortly afterwards, under similar circumstances to those of Zeki.

One could fill a volume with descriptions of the horrors and cruelties enacted in the terrible Saier; but it is useless to weary the reader with further accounts of the atrocities committed by order of that merciless tyrant, the Khalifa.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLANS FOR ESCAPE.

European Captives in Omdurman.—Artin, the Watchmaker.—Friends in Cairo.—Efforts of my Family to help me.—Difficulties of Communication.—Babakr Abu Sebiba's Failure.—Efforts of Baron Heidler and the Egyptian Intelligence Department.—Constant Failures.—Osheikh Karrar.—Abderrahman matures his Plans.—Hopes and Fears.—My Plan to gain Time.—I quit my Hut never to return.

In keeping me constantly close to his person, the Khalifa had a twofold object. He knew that I was the only remaining high Egyptian official who had a thorough knowledge of the Sudan, had traversed almost the entire country, and was complete master of the language. Utterly ignorant of the political situation, he imagined that if I succeeded in escaping, I should induce the Egyptian Government, or some European power, to enter the Sudan; and he well knew that in that case I should form a link between it and the principal tribal chiefs who were disaffected to him, and longed for the return of a settled form of Government. On the other hand, it flattered his vanity to have practically as his slave the man who had formerly governed the whole of the great province of Darfur, including his own country and tribe. He never attempted to conceal his feelings in this respect, and frequently said to the western Arabs, "See, this is the man who was formerly our

master, and under whose arbitrary rule we suffered. Now he is my servant, and must obey my commands at all times. See, this is the man who formerly indulged in the pleasures and vices of the world, and now he has to wear an unwashed jibba and walk barefooted. God indeed is merciful and gracious!" He paid much less attention to the other European captives, who gained a small livelihood by working at various trades in a quarter near the market-place, where they had built their own huts, and were left almost undisturbed by the other inhabitants of the city. Father Ohrwalder lived by weaving. Father Rosignoli and Beppo Rognotto (a former Mission brother) kept a cookshop in the market-place, and the Sisters lived with them until—with the exception of Sister Theresa Grigolini—they succeeded in escaping. Then there is Giuseppe Cuzzi, one of A. Marquet's former clerks, and a number of Greeks, Syrian Christians, and Copts,—in all some forty-five men who have married either Christians born in the country or Egyptians. The entire colony is termed the Muslimania* quarter, and they have elected from amongst themselves an Emir, under whose orders they agree to live, and who is responsible to the Khalifa for every member of the colony. The present Emir is a certain Greek called Nicola, whose Arabic name is Abdullahi. No one is on any account allowed to quit Omdurman; and they are obliged to guarantee each other. Consequently when Father Rosignoli escaped, his companion Beppo was thrown

* The term "Muslimani" is generally given to the descendants of "unbelievers;" it is an opprobrious epithet, and is applied by the Mahdists to all so-called renegades.

into prison, and was in chains when I left the town. After Father Ohrwalder's flight a much stricter surveillance was exercised over all these unfortunates. A place has been allotted to them in the northeastern portion of the mosque, where they have to attend prayers daily; but not being under special control, they take it in turns to be present, so that, in case of inquiry, the colony shall always be represented. Their huts are built adjoining each other, and in this way they can communicate without difficulty, and thus derive some alleviation of their sad lot by mutual sympathy; but their children are obliged to live in the various tekias (religious rest-houses), where they are taught the Kuran.

I have already described my own surroundings and mode of life; and it now remains for me to add that I was only permitted to converse with a few of the bodyguard who were, like myself, either under surveillance or specially employed as spies by the Khalifa to watch and report our every action and word. I was seldom permitted to enter the town; and I was strictly forbidden to make any visits.

The Khalifa is very fond of watches and clocks; and one of my many duties was to wind them up, and generally look after them. I availed myself of this privilege to occasionally visit an Armenian watchmaker named Artin, on the pretext that a clock or watch required repair. His house was situated near the market-place; and here I used to arrange meetings with some of the people I particularly wished to see. I never confided in Artin, and those who came to the shop invariably made some small purchases, and in doing so

we succeeded in exchanging, as it were quite casually, a few words. Most of my time was spent at the Khalifa's gate reading the Kuran. I was not permitted to write, as Abdullahi thought it unnecessary for me to practise an art of which he himself was ignorant. I invariably accompanied my master to the mosque, or when he appeared in public, and on these occasions my duties were somewhat those of an aide-de-camp. Being in receipt of no salary, my food was of the simplest, and consisted generally of asida, various sorts of sauces, and occasionally a little meat purchased in the market.

Abdullahi knew perfectly that I longed for freedom; and, in spite of all my efforts to conceal it, I could not overcome his very rational suspicion of me. By constant gifts of slaves, by offers of marriage with his family, and various other expedients, he did all he could to make ties which he thought would hold me down; but my continued refusal of these very questionable benefits only confirmed his suspicions that I intended to escape on the first possible occasion. After the fall of Khartum, my family had done all in their power to obtain news of me; but fortunately they realised how careful they must be. Herr Von Gsiller, the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General in Egypt, spared no pains to get news of me, and his efforts were heartily seconded by the officers attached to the Egyptian army, and other officials. It was at his suggestion that my relatives had communicated with me through the Governor of Suakin, in 1888; and I have described in the preceding pages how I was eventually forbidden by the Khalifa to hold any further intercourse with the outside world. Already my relations with the Khalifa had become much

strained, owing to these events; and they became much more so when a letter reached the Khalifa from Herr Von Rosty (who had succeeded Herr Von Gsiller), asking his permission to send a priest to minister to the members of the Mission, who, he stated, were Austrian subjects. At the same time, he had written to me asking for information on the present situation in the Sudan. The Khalifa, of course, took no notice of Herr Von Rosty's letter, and accused me of duplicity and disloyalty, because I had previously informed him that the members of the Mission, with the exception of Father Ohrwalder, were Italians. I had deliberately done this, as I feared that Abdullahi, in one of the sudden outbursts of passion against me, might vent his rage on those whom he believed to be my compatriots, and whom I was anxious to save; but now this letter, stating directly the contrary, was a heavy blow. It was quite beyond the Khalifa's capacity to understand that members of various nationalities could be, for the purpose of the Mission, under Austrian protection; and for a long time he incessantly upbraided me for having deceived him.

My family had placed a considerable sum of money at the disposal of the Austrian Consul-General, with the object of assisting me; and they, through the kind intervention of the various Sirdars of the Egyptian army, and of Major Wingate, the Director of Military Intelligence, succeeded in sending me occasional sums by the hands of trustworthy Arabs. Of course I invariably received considerably smaller sums than those which had been originally confided to them, though I was obliged to give receipts for the full amounts. How-

ever, I was truly thankful for what I received; and by the system which was established I was enabled to send my relatives scraps of information about myself and my affairs. I was obliged to exercise the most extreme caution in spending the money thus received, lest suspicion should be aroused; and therefore I continued to live as simply as possible, and expended all I could spare in cementing my various friendships.

My friends in Cairo had fully realised that, after I had been prevented from holding any communication with the outside, it was quite impossible for them to secure my release from the Khalifa's hands by ordinary methods. They therefore spared no efforts to afford me the means of affecting my escape should an opportunity occur. From the earliest days of my captivity, I had realised that my only hope of freedom lay in flight; and although the rise and development of this great movement interested me considerably,—especially as I had exceptional means of watching it,—I never for an instant abandoned the idea of succeeding in my object, though I little dreamt that twelve long years of hardship, misery, and humiliation must elapse before it could be accomplished.

For years, I did not confide my secret to a soul; but eventually I told Ibrahim Adlan of my intentions; and he promised to assist me to the best of his ability. Unfortunately, the Khalifa executed him soon afterwards; and in him I lost a true and kind friend and protector. On his death, I confided my secret to two influential individuals on whose silence I could rely; and though I knew that partly owing to their liking for me, and partly owing to their hatred of the Khalifa,

they would have willingly assisted me in the accomplishment of my object, our negotiations came to nothing. The money required would, I knew, be forthcoming; but they dreaded that after my escape their names might be eventually divulged; and as they were tied by their families to live in the Sudan, they knew that, in the event of discovery, the Khalifa would wreak his vengeance on their defenceless wives and children.

Meanwhile, my family had not been idle; and no sacrifice was too great for their love. Living in Vienna, ignorant of the real state of affairs in the Sudan, and not aware of how they could best help me, they trustfully continued to place considerable sums of money at the disposal of the Austrian Agency in Cairo, the representative of which received instructions from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to utilise it to the best of his ability. His Excellency Baron Heidler von Egeregg—now Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary, and who has been for some years Consul-General in Cairo—took a personal interest in my affairs, and did everything in his power to facilitate my escape. But it is only possible to secure the services of reliable persons through the intermediary of Government officials; and with this object in view, he enlisted the sympathies, first of Colonel Schaeffer Bey, and subsequently of Major Wingate, who had on several previous occasions endeavoured to assist me; and it is to his and to Baron Heidler's incessant efforts that I owe my freedom. Without their intervention, it would not have been possible to procure reliable Arabs to bring me occasional sums of money; and I owe to them my heartiest thanks for their frequent attempts to effect my rescue; and although, with the

exception of the last, they all failed, the arrangements were such that the Khalifa and his myrmidons never had the slightest suspicion of them.

Early in February, 1892, the former chief of the Dongola camel postmen, Babakr Abu Sebiba, arrived in Omdurman from Egypt. He was an Ababda Arab; and when brought before the Khalifa, he asserted that he had escaped from Assuan, that he sought the Khalifa's pardon, and begged to be allowed to settle down in Berber. As he had letters of introduction to the Emir of Berber, Zeki Osman, permission was accorded to him; and when going out at the door of the mosque, he nudged me, and whispered, "I have come for you; arrange for an interview." "To-morrow after evening prayers, here in the mosque," was my reply; and he then disappeared. Although I had not given up hope of escape, I never dared to be very sanguine; for I had had much experience of these Arabs and Sudanese, and knew that often their words go for nought, and their promises are more frequently broken than kept. I therefore spent the following day much as usual, though I could not help wondering what would be the upshot of the interview.

After evening prayers, and when all the people had left the mosque, Babakr passed the door at which I had seen him the previous day.

Cautiously I followed him; and together we entered the thatched portion of the building, which was in deep shade. Out of sight, and out of hearing, Babakr now handed me a small tin box, which, from the smell, seemed to contain coffee, saying, "This box has a double bottom. Open and read the papers enclosed in

it; and I shall be here again to-morrow at the same hour." Concealing the box under my jibba, I returned to my place, and, as chance fell out, was summoned that evening to sup with the Khalifa. Imagine my feelings: for the box was sufficiently large to be seen under my clothes; and here was I seated opposite my master with his lynx eyes fixed on me. Fortunately he was rather tired, and only talked on general subjects; though he did not fail to caution me to be loyal, or he would punish me unmercifully. Of course I assured him of my fidelity and affection for him; and, after having partaken of a little meat and dhurra, I feigned sudden illness, and obtained permission to withdraw. Hurrying home with all speed, I lit my little oil lamp, tore open the box with my knife, and there found a small piece of paper, on which the following words were written in French:

Babakr Wad Abu Sebiba is a trustworthy man.
(Signed.) SCHAEFFER, COLONEL.

On the other side of the paper were a few lines from the Austrian Agency confirming this. The writers had wisely omitted my name, fearing that it might fall into the hands of enemies; and now I had to exercise more patience until the following evening.

As agreed, I met Babakr as before; and he briefly informed me that he had come to arrange my escape, and that, having seen me, he would return to Berber to complete his preparations. As the Emir Zeki Osman had been ordered to come to Omdurman in July for the manœuvres, he proposed to accompany him, in order to carry out his object. I assured him that I was ready

at any time to make the attempt; and, after imploring him to do all in his power to help me, we parted. He returned, as arranged, in July with Zeki Osman; and, in a secret meeting, he told me that, in order to disarm suspicion, he had got married in Berber; that he had brought four camels with him, but that he had not yet arranged about our crossing the river. Should I, however, decide to risk flight, he would guide me through the Bayuda desert and by El Kaab (west of Dongola) to Wadi Halfa; but I knew that the camels could not possibly perform such a journey in the height of summer. I soon saw that the man wanted to spend a few more months in the Sudan, probably with his newly acquired bride; and so we agreed to postpone the attempt till the month of December, when the long nights would be more favourable to the enterprise. Months passed; and I heard from secret sources that Babakr was still at Berber. December went by, and the year 1893 had begun. Still no sign of my friend. At length he returned in July, and told me that the messenger whom I had despatched to Cairo asking for £100 had been delayed on the road; and that as he had arrived there at a time of year when the journey would have been impossible, the authorities had refused to supply him with the funds. He added, however, that he had brought two camels, and that if I would risk flight, he would try to procure a third. I saw that the man had been making inquiries, and had ascertained that at most it would only be possible for me to obtain a few hours' start, which would not be sufficient to insure success; besides he knew that it was out of the question starting in July. When therefore, I proposed

again postponing flight till the beginning of the winter, he readily acquiesced merely for form's sake. His constant visits to Omdurman had aroused the Khalifa's suspicions; and one of the Kadis notified him that he must attend the mosque five times daily, and should not leave Omdurman without the Khalifa's permission. Alarmed probably at the turn affairs had taken, he escaped and returned to Egypt. Three days after he had left, his absence was discovered. On his arrival in Cairo, as I subsequently learnt, he informed those who had sent him that he had frequently come to Omdurman; but that I had persistently refused to risk flight with him. Baron Heidler and Major Wingate, however, realised that the man's statement was untrue; and some time later I had an opportunity of informing them, through a trusty agent, of the man's behaviour.

These gentlemen subsequently made an agreement with a merchant named Musa Wad Abderrahman, promising him £1000 if he succeeded in effecting my escape, while at the same time he was furnished with what was necessary for the undertaking. In the winter I received information of this fresh enterprise; but it was not till June, 1894, that one of Musa's relatives, named Ahmed, told me that some Arabs had been secured who would arrive in a few days, and would attempt to fly with me. He also told me that a station had been prepared in the desert, where a change of camels would be in readiness, and that, in spite of the great heat, there was every prospect of the success of the undertaking.

On 1st July, Ahmed warned me that the camels had arrived, and that I should be ready to start the next

night. That evening, I told my servants that one of my friends was dangerously ill, and that I had obtained the Khalifa's permission to visit him, that I would probably stay the night, and that, therefore, they need not be uneasy if I did not return. That night, when my master had retired to rest, accompanied by Ahmed, I quitted the mosque; and, with bare feet and armed only with a sword, we hurried along the road leading towards the parade ground, and then turned off in a north-easterly direction.

The night was dark. During the day the first showers announcing the beginning of the rainy season had fallen; and, as we crossed the cemetery, I put my foot into an old grave, which had been washed out by the rain, and my foot got twisted in the bones of the skeleton on which I had stepped. It seemed as if the dead as well as the living were conspiring to throw difficulties in my path; but, in spite of the pain, I struggled on, and reached Khor Shambat. We crossed to the other side, where it was arranged the camels would await us. We searched up and down the banks. Ahmed even called out in a low tone; but not a sign of them was to be seen. The night was cool; but our efforts had bathed us in perspiration, and, after wandering to and fro for hours, in our vain search, we were at length obliged to give up and retrace our steps. What could have happened to our men? Could they have been noticed by some Dervishes who had perhaps arrested them on suspicion? Full of doubts and fears, we reached our homes in safety. I had parted from Ahmed on the parade ground; and I had begged him to let me know in the evening what had happened. At

the same time, I repeated that I was prepared to renew the attempt at any time. The dawn was just breaking as I reached the threshold of my hut, which I had quitted a few hours before, as I thought for the last time, and my feelings can be better imagined than described. I had scarcely been back more than a few minutes, when one of my fellow mulazemin, named Abdel Kerim, arrived with a message from the Khalifa to inquire the reason of my absence from morning prayers. I replied that I had been ill; and indeed my wretched appearance almost warranted such an assertion.

In vain I waited that evening for news from Ahmed; but I did not learn from him till two days afterwards, that the Arabs had reconsidered the matter, and had come to the conclusion that the risk of recapture was too great, and had returned to their homes instead of coming to the place of rendezvous. So we had completely failed, and considered ourselves lucky to have returned unnoticed from our midnight ramble.

Again I informed my Cairo friends of what had happened. They were unsparing in their efforts, and had now the valuable aid of Father Ohrwalder, who, when in Vienna, had visited my family, and had obtained from them some ether pills, which are very strengthening on a journey, and ward off sleep. They had been prepared by Professor Ottokar Chiari, and had reached me safely. They were in a small bottle which I had buried carefully in the ground.

I now made a confidant of Abderrahman Wad Harun, whom I despatched to Cairo with a message to Baron Heidler to place at his disposal the requisite means for

my escape. Again an agreement was made between this merchant and the Austrian Agency, with the concurrence of Major Wingate, and the assistance of Milhem Shakkur Bey and Naum Effendi Shukeir of the Intelligence Department. If successful, Abderrahman was to receive £1000; and he was also given the necessary outfit and £200 in advance.

Meanwhile, Major Wingate, who had been despatched to Suakin as acting Governor, fearing another failure, made a similar agreement with a local Arab named Osheikh Karrar, who, it was arranged, should attempt my rescue *via* Tokar or Kassala. One day, a Suakin merchant in Omdurman handed me a small slip of paper, on which was written,—

> We are sending you Osheikh Karrar, who will hand you some needles, by which you will recognise him. He is a faithful and brave man. You can trust him. Kind regards from Wingate.
> (Signed.) OHRWALDER.

Soon afterwards I heard from one of Abderrahman Wad Harun's relatives that the latter had arrived at Berber from Cairo, and was making preparations for my escape; but in order to avoid being suspected, he had decided not to come to Omdurman, and in this I fully concurred.

The 1st of January, 1895, had dawned. How many weary years of deprivation and humiliation I had spent in closest proximity to my tyrannical master! And would this year come and go like the rest, leaving me still in his clutches? No. I felt sure that the time was at length approaching when my friends would be able to break asunder the bonds which held me down,

and that I should once more see my relatives, fatherland, and the friends of my youth.

One evening, about the middle of January, a man I had never seen before passed me in the street, and made a sign to me to follow him; and as I brushed up against him, he whispered, "I am the man with the needles." Joyfully I led him in the dark to a little niche in the outside wall of my hut, and begged him to tell me his plans quickly. He first presented me with three needles and a small slip of paper, and then, to my dismay, told me that at present flight was impossible. "I came," said he, "with the full intention of taking you to Kassala; but now that military posts have been formed at El Fasher, Asubri, and Goz Regeb on the Atbara, which are in constant communication with each other, flight in this direction is not possible." He added further that one of his camels had died, and that he had lost money, owing to bad trade; and, in consequence, he had not sufficient means to arrange for the escape. He therefore begged that I would give him a letter to Major Wingate, asking for a further sum of money, and promising to return again in two months. I felt sure that the man did not really mean to risk his life for me; and, as he informed me he wished to leave without delay, I told him to meet me the following evening at the mosque. We then separated; and I returned once more to my post at the Khalifa's door. The note from Suakin contained a few lines of recommendation from Father Ohrwalder, to which I wrote a reply, briefly describing what had taken place; and the next night when we met, I handed to Osheikh the letter, which he

hurriedly thrust into his pocket, hoping that it would be the means of obtaining more money.

Bitterly disappointed, I was returning disconsolately to my house, when I suddenly came across Mohammed, the cousin of my friend Aberrahman. As if by mere chance I found him walking at my side; and, in a whisper, he said to me, "We are ready. The camels are bought; the guides are engaged. The time arranged for your escape is during the moon's last quarter next month. Be ready!" and without another word he left me.

This time I felt convinced that I was not to be doomed to disappointment. Towards the end of January, Hussein Wad Mohammed, who had also been engaged by Baron Heidler and Major Wingate, arrived in Omdurman, and secretly told me that he was ready to help me to escape. He begged me to let my friends in Cairo know what I had decided to do, and said that one of his brothers, who was about to proceed to Egypt, would be the bearer of the letter. As I was bound to Abderrahman, I decided to wait and see if his efforts would succeed, and, should they fail, I decided I would try Hussein; but I merely told the latter that at present I was not well enough to attempt so long a journey, and that at the end of February I would let him know definitely my decision. At the same time, I gave him a letter to my friends telling them that I intended to attempt escape with the assistance of Abderrahman; and, in case of failure, from which I prayed the Almighty to preserve me, I would seek the help of Hussein. I was now in some alarm that, so many people

being in the secret, the Khalifa might suspect something. Had he obtained the slightest clue to what was going on, I should have certainly paid for it with my life.

On Sunday, the 17th of February, Mohammed, in a few hurried words, told me that the camels would arrive the next day, that they would rest two days, and that the attempt would be made on the night of the 20th. He said that on Tuesday evening he would communicate with me by a sign by which I should know that everything was ready; and that I should then do all in my power to arrange that we should have as long a start as possible.

At last Tuesday night arrived, and I found Mohammed waiting for me at the door of the mosque. In a hurried whisper he told me that all was ready; and, after arranging a rendezvous for the following night, when the Khalifa had retired to rest, we separated.

I confess that I passed the greater part of that night in a state of fevered excitement. Would this attempt also fail like the others? Would some unforeseen event frustrate this effort too? These thoughts kept me awake and restless; and it was not till towards morning that sleep, which was so necessary to keep up my strength during the journey, came at length, and I had two or three hours of sound repose.

The next morning, when before the Khalifa's door, I feigned sickness, and asked the chief of the mulazemin for permission to absent myself from morning prayers, as I proposed taking a dose of senna tea and tamarind, and remaining quietly at home the following day. The

necessary permission was accorded, and Abdel Kerim promised to make my excuses to the Khalifa should he inquire for me. I felt sure that my master, when he knew that I was not present, would, under the pretext of solicitude for my health, send to my house to see if I was really there; but I could think of no other way of accounting for my absence.

Before sunset, I assembled my servants, and, after making them promise to keep secret what I was about to say, I told them that the brother of the man who had brought me letters, money, and watches from my relatives seven years before, had arrived with a further consignment, and that, as he had come entirely without the Khalifa's knowledge, I had decided to keep his arrival secret. I told them that I intended visiting him that night, as I wished to arrange with him without delay, and let him return at once. My good domestics, of course, believed the story implicitly; and I knew the thought that they would share some of the good things which were supposed to have come, would make them keep the secret. In continuation of my imaginary scheme, I ordered my servant Ahmed to meet me the next day at sunrise at the north end of the city, near the Fur quarter, with my mule. I told him not to be impatient if I happened to be late, as the business in hand was important, and might take some time to arrange; but that on no account was he to leave the rendezvous, as I intended to give him the money I received to take home. I impressed upon the others the necessity of maintaining perfect silence, as I ran a great risk of being discovered. Should any of the mulazemin ask for me, I told them to reply that I had been very

unwell during the night, and had ridden off, accompanied by my servant Ahmed, to seek advice of some man whose whereabouts they did not know, but that they supposed he was someone who could cure illness. To make my story appear more real, I gave my servants to understand that I should receive a considerable sum of money the next day, and, in anticipation, I presented them with several dollars apiece. My object in making these arrangements was to secure a few hours' delay before the hue and cry that I had escaped should be raised. My servant Ahmed would probably wait for some hours with the mule, while those in the household would anxiously expect my return with the money. I naturally concluded that, should the Khalifa send to inquire for me, the reply which my servants were to give, would avert suspicion for a time; and then it would take more time for them to find Ahmed, and his story of the arrival of the supposed messenger would still further perplex them. Of course they must eventually find out the deception; but to me every moment's delay in sending out search parties was of the utmost importance. After afternoon prayers, I once more returned to my house, again impressed on all my servants the immense importance of keeping the secret, and with repeated promises of reward, I stepped across the threshold, praying fervently to God that I might never set foot within my hut again.

CHAPTER XIX.

MY FLIGHT.

I escape from the Town by Night.—My Guides Zeki Belal and Mohammed.—A Scare.—130 Miles in 24 Hours.—Our Camels break down.—Hiding in the Gilif Mountains.—Precautions against Surprise.—Arrival of fresh Camels.—Our Journey to the Nile.—The Crossing.—Friendly Sheikhs.—Narrow Escape from a large armed Party of Mahdists.—Difficulties with my Guides.—Hamed Garhosh the Amrabi.—Out of Danger.—Assuan at last.—Congratulations and Welcome.—Arrival in Cairo.—Meeting with old Friends.

It was three hours after sunset. We had offered the evening prayer with the Khalifa, and he had withdrawn to his apartment. Another hour passed without interruption. My lord and master had retired to rest. I rose, took the farwa (the rug on which we pray) and the farda (a light woollen cloth for protection against the cold) on my shoulders, and went across the mosque to the road that leads north. I heard a low cough, the signal of Mohammed, the intermediary in my escape, and I stood still. He had brought a donkey. I mounted, and was off. The night was dark. The cold, northerly wind had driven the people into their huts and houses. Without meeting a soul we reached the end of the town where a small ruined house stands obliquely to the road, from which a man led out a saddled camel. "This is your guide. His name is

Zeki Belal," said Mohammed. "He will guide you to the riding camels that are waiting concealed in the desert. Make haste. A happy journey, and God protect you."

The man sprang into the saddle, and I got up and sat behind him. After about an hour's ride, we arrived at the spot where the camels were hidden among some low trees. All was ready, and I mounted the animal assigned to me.

"Zeki," said I, "did Mohammed give you the medicine?"

"No; what medicine?"

"They call them ether pills. They keep off sleep and strengthen you on the journey."

He laughed. "Sleep!" said he. "Have no fear on that account. Fear is the child of good folk, and will keep sleep from our eyes, and God in his mercy will fortify us." The man was right enough. We rode in a northerly direction. The halfa grass and the mimosa-trees, which in places grew rather close together, prevented the camels from making rapid progress in the darkness. At sunrise we reached Wadi Bishara, a valley extending here to a breadth of about three miles, which is sown in the rainy season with millet by the Jaalin tribes who live along the Nile.

With daylight I was now able to see my guides. Zeki Belal was a young fellow, with his beard still downy; Hamed Ibn Hussein, a man in the prime of life.

"Of what race are you?"

"We are from the Gilif mountains, master; and if God will, you will be satisfied with us."

"How long a start have we got from our enemies? When will they miss you?" the elder one asked me.

"They will look for me after the morning prayer; but before all doubt is over as to my escape, and before the men and the beasts are found with which to pursue me, some time must elapse. We may at least reckon on twelve or fourteen hours' start."

"That is not very much," answered Hamed. "But if the animals are up to their work, we shall have left a good bit of ground behind us."

"Don't you know our animals? Have they not been tried?" I asked.

"No. Two of them are stallions of the Anafi breed, and the third a Bisharin mare, bought expressly for your flight from friends," was the answer. "We must hope the best of them."

We drove the creatures at their swiftest pace. The country in these parts was flat, broken now and then by solitary shrubs, with here and there small stony hillocks. We rode without stopping until near midday, when suddenly my guide called out,—

"Halt! Let the camels kneel down at once. Be quick!"

I stopped. The camels knelt.

"Why?"

"I see camels a long way off and two led horses, and fear we have been seen."

I loaded my Remington to be prepared for any issue. "But if we have been seen," I said, "it is better to ride quietly on. Our making the animals lie down will excite their suspicion. In what direction are they going?"

"You are right," said Hamed Ibn Hussein. "They are marching northwest."

We rose and changed our line of march to the north-east, and were almost confident that we had passed unobserved when, to our despair, we perceived one of the party, which was about two thousand metres away from us, jump on his horse and gallop swiftly towards us.

"Hamed," said I, "I will go slowly on with Zeki. Do you stop the man, and answer his questions, and in any case prevent him from seeing me close. You have the money on you?"

"Good; but march slowly!"

I rode on quietly with Zeki, hiding my face with my farda, so as not to be recognised as a white man.

"Hamed is greeting the man, and has made his camel kneel," said Zeki, looking back. After about twenty minutes, we saw the man remount his horse, and Hamed urging his camel on to rejoin us.

"You must thank God for our safety," he cried, as he came up. "The man is a friend of mine, Mukhal, a Sheikh, on his way to Dongola with camels to bring dates to Omdurman. He asked me where I was going with the 'white Egyptian'. The man has the eyes of a hawk."

"And what did you answer?"

"I adjured him as my friend to keep our secret, and gave him twenty Maria Theresa dollars. We Arabs are all a little avaricious. The man swore a sacred oath to me to hold his tongue if he happened to fall in with our pursuers; and his people are too far off to tell black from white. Urge the camels on; we have lost time."

At sunset, we passed the hills of Hobegi, and camped nearly an hour later in the open country about a day's journey west of the Nile, so as to give our exhausted

animals some rest. We had been riding twenty-one hours without stopping, had eaten nothing all day, and only once drunk water. In spite of fatigue we ate bread and dates with a good appetite.

"We will feed our beasts and then get on," said my guide. "You are not tired?"

"No," I replied. "In Europe we say time is money. Here one might say time is life. Make haste."

But to our despair the beasts refused the food which was placed before them. Hamed made a little fire, took a piece of burning wood and a little resin, which he laid on the wood, then walked round the camels muttering some words which I could not understand.

"What are you doing?" I asked him, with some surprise.

"I fear the fikis of the Khalifa have bewitched our camels, and am trying the Arab's antidote."

"For my part," I replied, "I fear that they are second-rate market camels, or are sick. Let us give them a little more rest. Perhaps they will pick up."

As, after another half-hour's rest, the beasts still refused food, and longer delay was out of the question, we tightened up the saddle-girths again and mounted. The tired animals refused to trot, would only walk at a good pace, and as the sun rose we found ourselves on the high ground to the northwest of Metemmeh. The diminishing strength of our mounts filled us with anxiety, and it became clear to us that they would never hold out till the spot, about a day's journey north of Berber, on the edge of the desert, where we were to change camels. Towards afternoon, we let the exhausted animals rest in the shade of a tree, and agreed to make for the

Gilif range, distant a good day's journey to the north-west, where I should remain concealed in the uninhabited hills until my guides could succeed in securing other mounts.

About sunset we struck camp. The animals had so far recovered that they could walk at a good pace, and we reached, in the early morning, the foot of the Gilif mountain, which at this spot is quite uninhabited. We dismounted, driving our camels before us after an extremely difficult march of about three hours in a valley hemmed in by sheer rocks.

My guides, Zeki Ibn Belal, as well as Hamed Ibn Hussein, both belong to the Kababish tribe. The Gilif mountain is their own country; and they were familiar with every path. We unsaddled the camels, and concealed the saddles among the boulders.

"We have come into our own country; and she will protect her son," said Hamed Hussein. "Have no fear; as long as we live you need have no misgiving. Remain quietly concealed here. A little way off there is a cleft in the rocks containing water. I will water the animals there. Zeki will bring you a water-skin full. I will also hide the beasts elsewhere, that our halting-place may not be betrayed by the vultures circling above. Wait for me here; and we will see what our next step must be."

I was alone and somewhat depressed. I had hoped to make a straight dash for the Egyptian frontier, and to out-distance my pursuers by speed; and now a crowd of unexpected obstacles was gathering round me. About two hours later, Zeki arrived with the water-skin on his shoulders.

"Taste the water of my native land," he cried. "See

how fresh and pure it is. Take confidence. God, if He will, will bring our enterprise to a happy end."

I drank a deep draught. It was delicious indeed.

"I am full of confidence," I said to Zeki; "but a little put out by the delay."

"Malaish kullu shai bi iradet Illahi (It matters not. All happens as God ordains), and perhaps this delay has its good side too. Let us wait for Hamed Hussein."

Soon after midday Hamed came. We ate our frugal meal of bread and dates, and while doing so arranged that Zeki should ride to the friends who were privy to my escape, a brief two days' journey, and fetch new animals.

"I will ride the Bisharin mare," said Zeki. "She is strong, and has not yet got to the end of her tether. This is Saturday evening. I shall ride all night and to-morrow, Sunday. Monday morning early, please God, I shall reach our friends. We must allow one to two days there; because, it may be, no animals will be ready. But, Thursday or Friday, I should get here with fresh camels if no misfortune happens to me."

"It is better to put it a little later," I answered. "We will wait for you here till Saturday. If you arrive sooner, all the better; but remember that our life is in your hand. Above all, be cautious in bringing the animals, that you arouse no suspicion."

"Trust in our good fortune and my good-will," and he grasped my hand in farewell.

"God protect you, and bring you back right soon."

He tied a few dates up in a cloth as provision for the journey, and took the saddle on his shoulders. Hamed described the spot accurately to him where he would find

the mare. As he turned, he enjoined us to be careful not to be seen; and in a few moments he was lost to sight. We cleared the ground which was to serve as our night's resting-place, of stones, and were in the best of spirits as to our success.

"I have a proposal to make to you," said Hamed to me after a long interval. "A relation of mine, Ibrahim Masa, is Sheikh of this district, and has his house at the foot of the hill, about four hours' distance from here. Now though, as I hope, no one has seen us, still it would be better to warn him of our arrival, so that he may be prepared for any eventuality. I will describe our situation to him without mentioning your name. As my kinsman, he is bound to give us asylum, and would warn us in time of pursuit, if it should be that our track is followed to the base of the hills, though indeed this is scarcely to be feared. If you agree, I will go during the night, so as to see him without being observed by other people, and will be back with you early in the morning."

"The plan is good; but take twenty more dollars with you, and offer them as a small contribution to his house, and, as you have said, do not mention my name."

Hamed left me at sunset; and I was alone with my thoughts. I thought of my housefolk and companions, to whom, in spite of the difference of race and of many unattractive qualities, I had grown accustomed in the long course of years, and whom I had just left behind me in the hands of the enemy. I thought of the dear ones I was now on my way to meet, of my sisters, my friends and well-wishers. If only my adventures have a successful issue! Exhausted with fatigue, I fell asleep

on my hard bed. I woke while the dawn was gray, and shortly afterwards heard the sound of approaching footsteps. I knew it must be my guide.

"All goes well," said he as he came up. "The Sheikh, my kinsman, greets his unknown guest, and bids God protect you. Fortify yourself with patience. For the present, we have nothing else to do."

He sat down between two blocks of stone, from which his dark skin was hardly distinguishable, and kept watch. I sat a short distance below in the shade of a little tree which struggled for existence among the rocks; and we talked in low tones of the present and the former condition of the country. It was past midday when I suddenly heard behind the noise of footsteps, and, turning round, I saw, to my disgust, a man about one hundred and fifty yards off, climbing the slope opposite me, trying to draw the end of his farda, which was twisted round his loins, over his head. Judging from the direction he had come from, he must have seen us.

"In any case it is a fellow-countryman," said Hamed, who had heard the sound, and had perceived him. "Anyhow it will be better that I should overtake him and speak with him. Or do you not agree?"

"Certainly, make haste, and if necessary, give him a small present," I answered.

My companion left his seat, and followed the man at a swift pace. He had now reached the crest of the hill and passed out of my sight. A few minutes later, I saw them both approaching me with smiling faces.

"We are in luck," Hamed cried from a distance. "He is one of my numerous relations. Our mothers are children of two sisters."

The man came up to me and offered his hand in greeting.

"The peace of God be with you. From me you run no danger," he said as he sat down on the stone at my side.

I gave him a few dates, and bade him taste our travelling fare. "Who are you?"

"They call me Ali Wad Feid," he replied; "and, to be honest with you, my intentions were not well disposed to you. I was changing my pasture ground, and arrived a few days ago with my flocks at the foot of those hills which you see from here to the south. I went to the cleft in the rocks to see if there were much water there, because we might need it, although we also get drinking-water in the plain. There I found traces of a camel, and followed them up. When, in the distance, I saw the white skin of your feet which were sticking out of your hiding-place, I realised that a stranger was concealed here, and tried to get away again unobserved, so that," said he, smiling, "I might return again with a few comrades by night, and make your further journey easier by removing your superfluous luggage. I thank God that my cousin here caught me up. By night I should not, perhaps, have recognised him."

"Ali Wad Feid," said my guide, who had listened in silence, "I will tell you a little story. Listen! Many years ago, when I was a little fellow, in the days when the Turks ruled in the land, my father was Sheikh of these mountains, which then were thickly peopled. One night there came a man, a fugitive, who sought asylum with my father. He was closely pursued by Government troops, under suspicion of being a highway brigand who

had murdered some merchants. His women fell into the hands of his pursuers; but he himself sought and found protection with my father, who kept him in concealment. A long while after, my father went to the seat of Government at Berber, and by money and fair words succeeded in obtaining pardon for the man, against whom there existed no definite proofs of guilt. He went bail for him, and set free his women, who were in prison. That man's name was Feid—"

"And he was my father," interrupted Ali, whose face had grown grave during his narrative. "I was born later, and heard the story from my dead mother, on whom God have mercy. My brother, let me give you good tidings. What your father did for mine, his son will do for your father's son. In peace or in peril I am with you. But, follow me, and I will show you a better hiding-place."

We went some two thousand yards back round the hill towards the south, and reached a sort of little grotto formed of rock slabs, large enough to hold two men.

"When evening comes bring your baggage here, although there is nothing to fear, since the hills are uninhabited; but under the cover of darkness you can choose some other spot in the neighbourhood to sleep in. It is impossible to be quite sure that someone may not have perceived you, and have the intention which I confessed to have had, of returning after dark. I have lost time, and my road is a long one. I will go, pick up what news I can, and return to-morrow when it is dark, announcing my presence by a low whistle. Farewell till then!"

As Ali Wad Feid had advised us, we selected a place to sleep in, and early in the morning, before the sun rose, retired again to our cave. Throughout the day Hamed Hussein kept watch from a high point of vantage, like a sentry on a tower, and only came to me when driven in by hunger. Our bread came to an end this day, and we had only dates to eat.

In the evening, two hours maybe after sunset, we heard a low whistle. It was Ali Wad Feid, who faithful to his promise, had come to visit us. He brought some milk in a small vessel of gazelle-skin (the skin of young gazelles is tanned by the Arabs, and now much used for carrying milk in), and had rolled up some bread (millet cakes) in his farda.

"I pretended to my wife that I was going to visit the caravan folk, and show them hospitality," he said, after greeting us. "I cannot trust her with the truth, she is such a chatterbox."

"A feminine quality which many married men complain about in our country at home," I remarked with a smile, delighted at the prospect of such a grateful meal.

"I made inquiries at the well," he continued, "and heard of nothing to cause you uneasiness. Eat and drink your fill. I have every confidence in your good luck."

After we had done honour to his good fare, I begged him to return so as not to awake suspicion with his own folk by remaining out unduly long, and whispered to Hamed to give him a present of five dollars before he went.

"Do not return," I said to him in taking leave.

"Your comings and goings may excite suspicion among your people, and your footsteps may perhaps leave traces on the ground which would betray our hiding-place to others, unless, of course, you hear any really disquieting news. Farewell. I thank you for your loyal friendship."

Hamed Hussein accompanied his kinsman some little way.

"Ali would not take the money," he said, when he returned. "I had to press him very hard; and it was only the fear of offending you which induced him at last to accept it."

We once more selected our couches, and rested undisturbed till the morning, when we returned to the cave, or rather I did, for my companion had to go back to his post as watchman. This day went by equally without event, but how slowly the time seemed to pass! The hours grew to days, and thoughts succeeded thoughts in weary sequence. My patience was severely tried, but there was no help for it, and nothing to do but to bear it.

As our water supply threatened to fall short, Hamed Hussein went with the skin to the cleft in the rocks. At the same time, he intended to look up the camels, which had been hobbled, and were getting what food they could from trees and bushes.

"I shall return in about four hours. Meanwhile, remain quiet in the cave," he said to me, "and should anyone appear,—which God forbid!—it could only be one of my own countrymen, for no stranger gets so far as this, detain him, and tell him that Hamed Wad Sheikh Hussein is coming in a little while. But do not

yourself enter into any negotiation, and above all do not spill blood."

"I will follow your counsel whatever happens," I replied; "but I trust you will find me here undisturbed when you return."

My guide returned with the water-skin full even before the time he had indicated.

"I found the camels somewhat recovered, at any rate in appearance," he said, with evident satisfaction. "Give me a few dates. I am hungry, and must return to my watch tower."

The rest of the day passed slowly, but without episode. At night we betook ourselves to our sleeping-place, talked for a while in a low voice, and prayed that our patience might not be put to too hard a trial.

On Thursday morning, Hamed had gone as usual to his post of observation; and it must have been about midday when I suddenly saw him climb down from his seat. I clutched my rifle.

"What is the matter?"

"I see a man running in the direction of our former hiding-place. It must mean news. Remain here till I come back."

I sat down and waited for what seemed an eternity. Then I rose with caution to have a look out, and saw, a long way off, two people approaching me. My eyes could make out Hamed, and with him was Zeki Belal. As I stepped from my hiding-place, he perceived me, and ran up.

"God give you greeting, master. Here is good news for you," said he, shaking my hand. "I have arrived with two fresh camels, and have hidden them some way

behind. I will be off and fetch them." And he hurried back again.

About an hour later, he arrived with the new animals.

"You have been quick!" I cried with delight. "Now tell your story."

"It was Saturday evening when I left you," he replied. "I rode all night and all day. My Bisharin mare went splendidly over the ground, which was tolerably level, and on Monday morning I reached our friends. They sent immediately for the beasts you now see, which were at a considerable distance. They came in early on Tuesday. I started at midday. I rode slowly so as not to wear them out, and now we can start at once. And, oh, I had almost forgotten to tell you that your friends, after discussing it with me, went off to the camp on the edge of the desert, to warn their people there to be ready. I promised we would reach the tryst on Friday, or at latest on Saturday after sunset."

"Did you bring bread?" I asked the youth, who was talking away in high spirits. "We have got nothing but dates to eat."

"Good heavens! I forgot that in my haste."

"No matter," I replied, seeing him look rather crestfallen. "Even without dates we could hold out for this short ride."

"Zeki," said Hamed, "saddle the light-coloured camel, go with our friend and brother to the hollow rock, and give the camels water. Wait for me there. I will take the other saddle and follow with my own camel, which has recovered sufficiently to stand this com-

paratively short march. But it will be better," he added, turning to me, "that you should not go right up to the spring, but remain hidden in some suitable spot near till we fetch you. One never can be too sure. There are so many thirsty folk in the wide world."

I went with Zeki, leading one of the camels, towards the cleft where the water was, and hid myself in a place my guide suggested, among the boulders of rock.

About two hours before sunset, Hamed and Zeki came with the three camels that had just been watered, and the skins all filled. We mounted and rode east-northeast across hills, which at times were very steep to climb, till, as darkness gathered round us, we arrived in the plain without having been observed.

Throughout the night, we rode without a halt at a slow trot or a walk, and at daybreak Hamed calculated we had left half the road behind us.

"This is the most critical day of our journey," said my guide. "We come into the neighbourhood of the river, and cross pasture grounds of the river tribes. God grant we reach our destination unobserved."

The aspect of the country does not change. The veldt, as one may call it, is covered with a thin mat of grass, with here and there clumps of half-dried mimosa bushes. The ground is sandy, and at times covered with stones. We rode on without stopping, and ate our frugal meal, which consisted of nothing but dates, as we rode. When the sun was at the zenith, we saw in the distance a flock of sheep with its shepherds. We turned a little aside from our straight course, and Zeki rode off to them to ask for news; but when he rejoined us he said he had learned nothing of interest. Though we

came upon constant tracks of camels, donkeys, sheep, etc., in the soil, our eyes detected nothing which caused us concern, and the country had become quite flat again.

"Do you see the broad, gray band in front crossing from south to northwest?" Hamed asked me. "That is the great caravan track which leads from Berber to Wadi Gammer and Dar Shaigia. If we pass that without being seen, we have nothing more to fear, for between this and the river there is only stony ground, without a vestige of vegetation, and quite uninhabited. But now you must follow my directions closely. Let the camels advance at a slow pace, and each some five hundred paces from the next till we reach the big track. When we get there we will turn into the road and proceed for a few minutes in the direction of Berber. Then we will leave it again, and march in an easterly direction. Do you see that stone hillock about three miles away? There we will join again. This is the only way to put anyone who may be pursuing us off our track."

We did as he had instructed us, crossed the caravan road, which is at most times tolerably frequented, without seeing a trace of anyone, and met again at the spot indicated.

"And now urge the animals on. Don't spare them. Let them do us their last service," said Hamed, with a merry laugh. "All has gone well."

Since I left Omdurman I had not seen a laugh upon his face, and I knew that on this side of the river we had nothing more to fear.

So on we went, driving the weary camels forward with the stick without much mercy, till, leaving a range of hills on our right, we reached the Kerraba.

The Kerraba is a plateau with a sandy soil. The surface is covered with black stones, ranging from the size of a man's fist to that of his head, packed closely together. Single blocks of rock are seen at a certain distance one from another. The animals could scarcely make any progress over the rolling level. It was a break-neck march. Towards evening, we saw the Nile in the far, far distance, like a silver streak across the landscape. Climbing down from the plateau in the darkness we reached a valley lying between stony hills. We halted and took the saddles off. The river was about two hours' march away.

"Our mission is near its end," said Hamed and Zeki, as they sat on the ground munching dates. "Stay here with the animals. We will go to a spot we know near the river; and there we shall find your friends, who will escort you on."

I was left alone, looking forward in the highest spirits to the future. Already in imagination I saw my own people, saw my fatherland. I awoke after midnight. No one had come, and I began to feel somewhat concerned at the delay, for if they did not soon return I could not cross the river that night. It was not till some two hours before dawn that I heard footsteps. It was Hamed.

"What news?" I asked impatiently.

"None!" was the despairing answer. "We could not find your friends at the place indicated. I returned because you cannot remain here after daybreak. You are too near human habitations, and exposed to the risk of being seen. I left Zeki behind to look for your people. Take the water-skin on your shoulders and

some dates. I am too exhausted to carry anything. We must go back on to the Kerraba. There you must stay till the day is over, hidden among the stones."

I did as I was bidden, and reached the plateau in about an hour. After we had marched a little further in the darkness, Hamed stood still.

"Stop here," he said. "Make a ring of stones as camel-herds do in winter to protect themselves from the cold, and lie down between them. You know how to do it. You are just as much an Arab as one of us. In the evening, I will come again to fetch you. I go back to the camels. The people of these parts know me, and I have nothing to fear. If they ask me any questions I shall say I have come from Dar Shaigia to look up some people who are settled here. Luckily, I have some relations here also." He went back. I stood upon the rolling plain alone—abandoned.

I piled the stones on top of one another to a height of about half a metre, leaving just room enough between for myself, my water-skin, and my gun. Morning began to grow gray, and I crept into my hiding-place. The ground beneath was sandy. I dug it up with a flat, pointed stone, and heaped up sufficient between the piles of slabs to prevent my being seen from without. I flung myself on my back in weariness, and stretched out my limbs. Again reflection came and thoughts thronged past. I looked back again to the past, and pictured to myself the Khalifa's anger at my flight. My imagination sped once more towards my dear ones. I longed to be united to them again, and, unanticipated, almost insuperable obstacles seemed to be springing up round me. What change has come over me? Where is

my motto of "Never despair?" However desperate the circumstances in which I may have found myself, I have never lost courage, never abandoned confidence in my ultimate good fortune. To-day a sense of fear is pressing on me. Perhaps it is that I am already lying in what will be my grave. But that is, after all, the end of every man. Be his days long or short, he can go no other way. And yet to die in a strange land forsaken! God, up there in heaven, have mercy on me, have mercy on a miserable man who, if he has sinned, has surely bitterly atoned for his transgressions. God have mercy on me! Let me see my friends and dear ones, my fatherland again!

Then I grew calm once more. After all, I thought, in spite of a few little delays, affairs are not so bad. To-night, I shall cross the river. To-morrow, I reach the desert. In two or three days, I shall be beyond the reach of danger, and fly towards those I crave to see. I smiled once more, and grew full of confidence and hope. The sun was burning hot. I had brought my farda, and held it up over me to keep my face in the shade, waiting in patience for what would follow.

A little after midday, I heard a low whistle, and raised myself to look out over the stones. It was Hamed, who approached me smiling.

"Good news," he cried. "We have found your people."

A sense of joy possessed me as I caught his words, and my lucky star was once more in the ascendant. When he came up to me, he sat down outside the stones.

"You may make yourself more comfortable," he said. "I have kept a good lookout all round. You have

nothing to fear. Zeki found your people before daybreak, and just now one of them came over to us to find out where we were. They are ready. In the evening, they will come to fetch you. But you will have to take great care, for your flight is known in this part of the country. Come with me now, or better still, wait till darkness comes on. I am going now. Can you find the way alone, or shall I come back for you?"

"It is not necessary for you to go over the ground again. I know the place, and will join you in the evening."

The sun had disappeared from the horizon when, with gun and water-skin slung upon my back, I left the spot which had cost me such bitter hours of reflection. When I reached my companions, I found myself in the presence of two men who were strangers to me.

They greeted me, saying, "We are sent by your friend Ahmed Wad Abdalla, and are of the Gihemab tribe. We will take you down to the river. He himself will cross the stream with you. On the other side the camels are waiting ready to take you across the desert. Take leave of your guides. Their task is done."

I shook my old friends by the hand, and thanked them with words which came from the heart for their devotion. "Farewell, and may we meet again in better times of peace."

We saddled two camels and left the third to my former guides. I mounted, and one of the new-comers got up behind me.

"What is your name?" I asked him.

"They call me Mohammed, sir, and my companion's name is Ishaak."

"Do you go with me across the desert?"

"No, there are others told off for that. Let the camel walk slowly; and it will be better to cover your face in spite of the darkness. Orders came from Berber three days ago to have all the roads closely watched; and the ferries have been put under observation. Still, in our country, you have nothing to fear."

After proceeding for about two hours in an east north-east direction, we approached the river. We could hear the groaning of the water-wheel, the cries and laughter of the slaves and their women at work. As we came up to a small clump of bushes, Mohammed, who was riding behind me, sprang down and said, "Make the camel kneel down, slowly—gently, that he may not grunt, and so attract attention."

They knelt down without a sound.

Bidding me remain there till they returned with Ahmed, they disappeared into the darkness. I waited about an hour, and then saw four men approaching. The tallest of them came up and embraced me. Pressing me to his breast, he said in a low voice,—

"God be praised. Welcome to the land of my fathers. I am your brother Ahmed Ibn Abdalla, of the tribe of Gihemab. Believe my words, you are saved. Mohammed, Ishaak, take the saddles off the camels quietly. Make no noise. Ride a good way on along the stream. Blow the water-skins full of air, and tie them round the camels' necks. Then cross the river at different spots, and to-morrow await my orders near the

stones of the 'Fighting Bull.' Meantime, do you follow me," he said, turning to me.

He himself, with the fourth man, took the saddles on their backs, and I followed. A few minutes later, we reached the shore of the sacred Nile, and found, in a little hollow washed out by the current, a tiny boat constructed by my friends themselves, scarcely large enough to hold us. We climbed down the steep bank, got into the boat, and pushed off. It took us more than an hour to cross the stream. When we reached the far side, the other man, who had remained in the little boat, guided it back into the river, and bored a hole in the bottom, swimming to the land while the boat sank in the stream, and with it disappeared all traces of our crossing. We marched for about half an hour, and then Ahmed Abdalla bade me wait there while he went away, to return soon after with a dish of milk and bread.

"Eat and drink," said he, "and have no more fears as to the success of your flight, for I swear to you by God and the Prophet you are saved. I had intended that you should start to-night; but the hour is already too late. It will be better that you should wait till to-morrow evening. Besides, to-morrow is the day when your camels should be watered. As we are here too near to human habitations, my nephew, Ibrahim Ali, will conduct you to a place some distance off which is difficult of access. Wait for me there. I will bring you an animal to ride, or do you feel strong enough to go on foot?"

"I am strong, and can walk," I replied. "Where is Ibrahim Ali?"

"He is here; and he will be your guide through the desert."

It was a black night. Ibrahim went first with an empty water-skin in his hand along the caravan track leading beside the river to Abu Hamed, and I followed. After proceeding about three English miles, he went down to the river, filled the skin half full, and then changed the direction, turning inland. The march was very difficult. The big stones with which the hills were covered hindered one's progress. I was dead beat, and staggered about to right and left like a drunken man. At last we halted by a hollow in the ground.

"This is the spot which my uncle indicated," said Ibrahim, who had kept silence up till now. "Remain quietly here without misgiving. To-morrow evening, I shall bring the camels, and we will start. Here is water and bread. I will return now to make my preparations."

Once more I was alone. Once more I was exposed for a long day to the scorching sun; but now it was easy for me to bear, for I was near to the goal I had longed for so wildly. At last the sun disappeared from the horizon; and, after waiting about an hour more, I heard the sound of hoofs moving quickly over the stones. I rose, and recognised Ahmed Abdalla, accompanied by two men on donkeys.

Springing off in haste, he pressed me warmly to his breast. "God be thanked that you are safe! These two men," pointing to his companions, "are my brothers, and have come with me to wish you luck."

I pressed their hands in greeting, and, turning to

Ahmed, said, "But I do not understand you—your tremendous spirits—"

"Of course not," he replied, "for you do not know the great danger you have escaped. Listen! Three days ago, the Emir of Berber, Zeki Osman, learned, we know not how, that the Egyptian garrison at Murrat had received important reinforcements, and intended to attack the Mahdist station at Abu Hamed. Zeki Osman is sending reinforcements, and to-day at noon sixty horsemen and about three hundred foot soldiers passed our dwellings. You know these wild bands who call themselves Ansar [defenders of the faith]. We had killed a sheep, and were busy preparing a portion for you to take with you on the road, when they suddenly came upon us by surprise. They consumed what was intended for your provision, and then scattered in search of loot. We were in terrible anxiety on your account, fearing one of these wild fellows might find his way to your hiding-place. Now they have marched on. The curse of God go with them! Thanks be to Him, who has protected you!"

And I also humbly thanked my Creator, who had saved me from this great and unexpected danger. As I learned later, the Commander-in-chief of the Egyptian army, General Kitchener Pasha, had come to Wadi Halfa to conduct the usual manœuvres. Captain Machell Bey marched with the Twelfth Sudanese Battalion and two hundred of the Camel Corps from Wadi Halfa to Korosko by Murrat, and this accounted for the rumour of a strengthening of the garrison at Murrat, and the contemplated attack on Abu Hamed.

"The camels will be a little late," said Ahmed, con-

tinuing. "I sent them hastily away into the interior when the Dervishes came in, for fear they might press them into service to carry their ammunition or other baggage. If, however, you feel inclined to rest in patience till to-morrow, we should be able to procure fresh provisions."

"No. I want at all hazards to start at once, and want of provisions will not alter my resolve," I replied. "I trust the camels will come soon."

It was towards midnight when they brought in the three animals. Ahmed Abdalla presented my two guides to me. "Ibrahim Ali, the son of my brother, and Yakub Hassan, also a near relative of mine. They will conduct you to Sheikh Hamed Fedai, the head of the Amrab Arabs, who are subject to the Egyptian Government. He will assist you in getting on to Assuan."

We filled the water-skins and took our leave.

"Forgive the failure of provision for your journey," said Ahmed Ibn Abdalla. "It is not my fault. You have meal and dates, enough to keep hunger off, though there are no luxuries."

We rode three hours and a half east-northeast before the sun rose, and as the dawn grew gray found ourselves east of Wadi el Homar (the Vale of Asses), which, though called after the wild asses which inhabit it, is in a great measure devoid of vegetation. As we proceeded, the country assumed the genuine characteristics of the desert,—wide stretches of sand, with here and there, at long intervals, ridges of hills, but never a tree or trace of grass. After riding for two days, almost without a halt, we reached the hills of Nuranai, formerly occupied by the Bisharin Arabs. The

valley, running in a northeasterly direction for the most part, between ridges with very steep walls, grows mimosa-trees along either side, and in one lateral valley are trees which take their name from the hills.

Ibrahim Ali got off and took an observation from the heights, and, finding that the valley was quite unoccupied, we entered it, hastily watered our camels, and partially filled our water-skins.

The well lies in a hollow some twenty-five yards across, and some eighteen feet deep, dug out with a sharp decline towards the centre. Down this sloping plane there are slabs of rock and stones, serving as steps, by which one descends to the water-hole in the middle. As wells are always places where people are apt to collect, we left the spot and rested in the plain, after crossing the hills of Nuranai in about three hours.

There was a great difference between my former and my present guides. The first were brave, devoted fellows, ready even to sacrifice their lives for me, whereas these new ones were just the contrary. They grumbled at the service which it seems their relative Ahmed Abdalla had forced upon them, and were forever complaining of want of sleep and hunger, and at the danger of the enterprise, the reward for which would go to others. Through their carelessness they had dropped my sandals and tinder-box on the road; and the loss of the former was destined to cause me much trouble later on.

The next day, a Thursday, we reached the groves of Abu Hamed an hour before noon, and though the tribes who at present live in these parts are hostile to the Mahdists, I preferred to remain hidden. Ibrahim

Ali and Yakub Hassan had been ordered by Ahmed Abdalla to guide me to Sheikh Hamed Fadai; but this did not suit their views.

They came to me in the afternoon and represented to me the risk they would incur if their people missed them for many days. Since it was certain everything would come to the Khalifa's ears which was calculated to throw light on the question of who had helped me in my flight, and since their tribe was already under suspicion of being friendly to the Egyptian Government, there was danger not only for them but also for my friend Ahmed Abdalla. In conclusion, they begged to be allowed to go and look for a man who was well known to them both, and living in these parts, who would conduct me further. I saw that their reluctance would prove of more harm than service to me as I proceeded further, and agreed to their proposal, almost with alacrity, so distasteful had both my guides become to me, and bade them settle the matter as quickly as possible according to the best of their powers.

It was not yet sunset when they brought back the man in question. He was an Amrab Arab named Hamed Garhosh, and considerably the wrong side of fifty in years.

"Every man looks to his own advantage and profit," he said curtly to me after the greeting. "Your guides, whom I know well, wish me to show you the way from here to Assuan. I am ready to do so, but what shall I earn by the job?"

"On the day of my arrival, I will pay you there one hundred and twenty Maria Theresa dollars, and in

addition a present, which I shall calculate according to the manner in which your duties are accomplished."

"I accept," said he, giving me his hand. "God and the Prophet are my witnesses, that I trust you. I know your race. A white man does not lie. I will bring you to your own folk, across untrodden mountain ways, known only to the fowls of the air. Be ready. After the sun is down we start."

I selected the strongest of the three camels for the remainder of my journey, took two water-skins, the greater part of the dates, and a portion of dhurra for my provision. As the darkness closed in Hamed Garhosh arrived.

His son had gone away on the only camel which he possessed, to the country of Robatab near the river, to fetch grain, and he was therefore obliged to perform his functions as guide on foot. Since the road was most of it mountainous, however, and the camel could only go at a foot's pace, he would not be any the worse off on that account. It was merely a question of good-will and stout legs. I took leave of Ibrahim and Yakub with few words; and, there was no doubt about it, we were mutually glad to part company.

After a march of more than two days, crossing for the most part bare ridges and stony hills we reached, on Sunday morning, a small well, nearly dried up, called "Shof el Ain;" and though presumably it was not likely to be visited by anyone, I waited for my guide, as he desired, at a spot an hour's distance from it.

Our food consisted of dates and bread which we baked ourselves. That is to say, an apology for bread, for I am convinced, though my guide prided himself

particularly on his talent, that the stuff which he produced would give our European bakers a proper sense of disgust, both on account of its appearance and its taste. To prepare it, my guide piled together a lot of stones about the size of pigeon's eggs, and laid dry wood on top of them. Then he kneaded dhurra mixed with water in a wooden vessel, and lighted his pile of fuel with flint and tinder. When the wood had burned out, he removed the embers from the glowing stones, poured his dough over them, and then replaced the embers on the top of that again. A few minutes after he rescued his work of art from its fiery grave, beat it severely with a stick, to remove the superfluous ashes and stones which stuck to it, and served it up. This abortive production we ate, if not quite with pleasure, at any rate with hearty appetite, and realised the truth of the proverb. After resting a little while, we left the neighbourhood of the fountain, and, in a few hours, reached the first slopes of the Etbai mountains.

These mountains (El Etbai), stretching between the Red Sea and the Nile, are inhabited in the southern portion by Bisharin and Amrab Arabs, and in the north by the Ababda tribe. Between lofty black cliffs, absolutely bare of vegetation, rising in sheer perpendicular, stretch broad valleys well wooded, which the camel-breeders of these tribes pasture in. We traversed a well-nigh impassable road, moving on without resting, impelled by my desire to see my own folk and to finish the weary journey as quickly as possible. Though we had nothing more to fear, for we were by now out of the power of the Mahdists and on Egyptian territory, my guide insisted on the importance of not being seen.

He was afraid of being recognised by the people, who have commercial relations with the Sudan. Since his home lay on the border, and he was often obliged for various reasons to go to Berber, the knowledge that he had served me in my flight might be fraught with most serious consequences for him.

But with him the spirit was willing though the flesh was weak. Being already advanced in years, the want of proper food and the overtaxing march had their effect on his health. In addition to this, he felt the cold, which was often severe, so much that he fell ill, although I had made over to him my jibba, and had nothing myself upon my body but the farda and hezam (a strip of woollen cloth to wind round the body, eight to nine yards in length). In order to get on I made over the camel to him for the last four days, and walked behind him with my bare feet over the stones; for my former guides had lost my sandals, and this was therefore for me, from the physical point of view, the hardest part of my journey.

Even our camel seemed to be going to leave us in the lurch. He had got a raw place on his off fore-foot, and had besides injured it so severely with a pointed stone that the unfortunate beast could hardly walk on it. I was obliged to sacrifice one of my hezamin, with which, by binding it in quadruple fold, I made a kind of shoe for him, which had, however, to be renewed every twenty-four hours. I had seen this done by camel-herds in Darfur, though they use leather for the purpose, and the old experience now stood me in good stead.

At last, on Saturday, the 16th of March, in the morning at sunrise, descending from the heights, I saw

the river Nile and the town of Assuan along its shore. I cannot describe the feelings of joy which possessed me. My woes were at an end; saved from the hands of fanatical barbarians, my eyes beheld for the first time the dwellings of civilised people, in a country governed with law and justice by its ruler. My heart went out to my Creator in thankfulness for His protection and His guiding hand.

I was received in the most friendly manner at their quarters by the English officers in His Highness the Khedive's service, and the Egyptian officers, who only just then learned the surprising news of my arrival; and each vied with the other to do all that was in his power to help me to forget the miseries I had gone through.

The commanding officer and Governor of the frontier, who happened to have arrived almost at the same moment in Assuan, Colonel Hunter Pasha, as well as his officers, Majors Jackson, Sidney, and Machell Bey, with Bimbashi Watson, and others whose names I cannot at this moment call to mind, generously placed their wardrobes at my disposal; and I availed myself of their kindness of what was strictly indispensable. Before, however, I changed my clothes, my excellent friend Watson, who is a capital artist, asked leave to make a sketch of me, a request to which I was delighted to accede.

As to my guide, Hamed Garhosh, with the assistance of a former acquaintance, Butros Bey Serkis, who is now British Vice-Consul in Assuan, I at once paid him the one hundred and twenty Maria Theresa dollars. He also received from me a present of money, clothes, and arms, while over and above this Hunter Pasha presented him with a gift of £10 as a token of joy at my safe

arrival; and so, having suddenly become a "man of means," he took a touching farewell of me and departed.

A short time afterwards, telegrams of congratulation arrived. The first was from Major Lewis Bey on behalf of himself and the garrison of Wadi Halfa. The second, from the chief of the Austrian Diplomatic Agency in Egypt, Baron Heidler von Egeregg, who has been so indefatigable on my behalf. Then from my devoted friend, Major Wingate Bey. Baron Victor Herring and his sons, who were travelling on the Nile, were the first of my own countrymen to greet me.

As it happened that the postal steamer was starting that afternoon, I was recommended to avail myself of it to continue my journey. Escorted by all the officers, to the tune of the Austrian national hymn (played by the band of the Sudanese battalion), which it brought the tears into my eyes to hear, I went on board the steamer, amid the hurrahs of a number of tourists of all nations assembled on the bank.

I was deeply moved. Though I have ever tried to live up to my standard of honour in whatever circumstances I have been placed, which, indeed, any officer in a similar position would surely do, I had done nothing to prepare me for, still less to deserve, this public expression of sympathy, and it made me feel very humble.

I travelled in company with Machell Bey, who commands the Twelfth Sudanese Battalion, and whose march during the manœuvres from Wadi Halfa by Murrat to Korosko had been the cause of my provisions being eaten up, and of the short commons I had to put up with in the desert. I took a terrible vengeance. He had to submit unconditionally to all my whims in food

and drink, and endured his martyrdom with extraordinary good-nature and soldierly fortitude.

When I arrived on Sunday evening in Luxor, I was again the object of a lively demonstration of sympathy from the European travellers, and here received, through Baron Heidler, a telegram from my dear sisters, and from my native city of Vienna. Sisters and native city! How sweet the words sound!

On Monday, at five in the afternoon, we reached Girga, the southernmost station on the Egyptian State railway, and proceeded to Cairo, which I reached at six in the morning, on Tuesday, the 19th of March. In spite of this early hour, Baron Heidler von Egeregg, with his staff, and the Austrian Consul, Dr. Carl Ritter von Goracuchi, had come to the station to meet me; and there, too, was my dear friend Wingate Bey, to whom I can never sufficiently show my gratitude in word or deed. The "Times" correspondent was also there; and Father Rosignoli, with a number of others, and, of course, a photographer taking snap-shots.

We drove to the Austrian diplomatic agency, where I was for a long time the guest of the warm-hearted Baron Heidler, who had worked so hard for my freedom, and whose actions were prompted, not only by a desire to do his duty as a representative of the Government, but who was actuated by a deep sympathy for the sufferings of a fellow-creature held down in miserable bondage.

On arrival, I found my rooms adorned with the flags of my dear fatherland, and decked with roses and flowers, whilst above the door was written, "A hearty welcome home." On the same day, I received telegrams

of congratulations from my family, friends, fellow-students, and from several newspapers. I also met with a hearty welcome from His Royal Highness, Duke Wilhelm of Würtemberg, and His Serene Highness, General Prince Louis Esterhazy, both of whom had been in the Bosnian campaign when I had served there with my regiment, and who greatly honoured me by their expressions of genuine sympathy with me in the hardships I had undergone, and in the joy I now experienced at having escaped at last from the tyrannical thraldom of the Khalifa. I was received in audience, soon after my arrival, by His Highness the Khedive of Egypt, who conferred upon me the title of Pasha. I had entered the Sudan sixteen years before as a first lieutenant of the Austrian army, and, whilst Governor of Darfur, had been granted the Egyptian military grade of lieutenant-colonel, and now, on my return, I was promoted to the rank of colonel, and posted to the Egyptian Intelligence Department.

A few days after my arrival, when seated on the balcony of the Agency, and looking down on the garden all fresh with the verdure of spring, I espied a tame heron stalking across the flower-beds. Instantly I thought of Falz-Fein of Ascanea Nova, in Tauride, South Russia, and I hurried to my room, and then and there wrote to him a full account of the crane which he had released in 1892, and which had been killed in Dar Shaigia. It was the greatest pleasure to feel myself in a position to give the former owner of the bird an accurate account of what had happened; and, soon afterwards, I received a reply from Mr. Falz-Fein, who possesses a large estate in the Crimea, thanking me warmly for my letter, and inviting me to pay him a visit, which, un-

fortunately, the numerous calls on my time have hitherto prevented me from accepting.

A series of official and private calls, numerous invitations, and other social duties so occupied my time that some weeks elapsed before I could undertake any serious work. My first duty was, of course, to submit a detailed official report to my military superiors; and it was not till some time later, that I began to describe the story of my life during the last sixteen years.

My old friend and comrade in captivity, Father Ohrwalder, who is now a missionary at Suakin, took an early opportunity of coming to Cairo to welcome me. Our meeting was indeed a happy one, and I rejoiced to be able to thank him personally for all the assistance he had given in arranging for my escape.

The contrast between my past and present life, the influence of fresh impressions, the many changes I see around me, sometimes make my head feel heavy,—heavy, as though I had just woke up from an evil dream,—twelve years' captivity, a long dream indeed!

It was long before my excitement subsided, but gradually I began to settle down and collect my thoughts. Now again in the midst of civilised society, once more a man among men, my thoughts often turn back to the fanatical barbarians with whom I had to live so long, to my perils and sufferings amongst them, to my unfortunate companions still in captivity, and to the enslaved nations of those remote territories. My thanks are due to God, whose protecting hand has led me safely through all the dangers behind me.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCLUSION.

Africa, Past and Present.—The Sudan, Past and Present.—Rise, Progress, and Wane of Mahdism.—How long will it last?—The Khalifa's present Position.—European Encroachment.—"Whites" in the Bahr el Ghazal.—Important strategical Position of the Province.—Time and Tide wait for no Man.—I recover my long-lost Sword.—A last Word.

After more than sixteen years in Africa, including twelve years of captivity, during which I was cut off from all communication with the civilised world, I have at length had the good fortune to return to Europe. How Africa has changed within this period! Regions in the exploration of which Livingstone, Speke, Grant, Baker, Stanley, Cameron, Brazza, Junker, Schweinfurth, Holub, Lenz, and hundreds of others risked their lives, are now accessible to civilisation. In most of these, in which the explorer had formerly to encounter the greatest dangers, there are now military posts and stations to afford security and facilitate the trade which is constantly becoming more active. From the east, Italy, England, Germany, from the west, the Congo State, France, and England, are daily enlarging their spheres of influence, and are now on the point of joining hands in Central Africa. Wild tribes, who in their modes of life are nearer to beast than to man, are be-

ginning to know new wants, beginning to understand that there are beings mentally superior to themselves, and who, through the appliances of modern civilisation, are unconquerable even in foreign lands. The more northerly of the still independent Mohammedan States —Wadai, Bornu, and the Fellata Kingdoms—will doubtless sooner or later be compelled to conclude alliances with some of the advancing powers, perceiving that only in this way their hereditary rule can be secured.

In the middle of Africa, between the lands just mentioned and the powers advancing from east, south, and west, lies the former Egyptian Sudan, now under the rule of the Khalifa Abdullahi, the despotic head of the Mahdists. No European can venture to cross the limits of this land, cut off from civilisation, extending in the south along the Nile to Reggaf, and east to west from Kassala to near Wadai; death, or lifelong capitivity, would be his lot. Yet it is only within the short period of ten years that the land has been subjected to these miserable conditions. For more than seventy years, since the time of Mohammed Ali, it remained under the rule of Egypt, and was open to civilisation. In the chief towns were found Egyptian and European merchants. In Khartum itself, the foreign powers had their representatives. Travellers of all nations could pass through the land unharmed, and found protection and help through their aid. Telegraphs and a regular postal service facilitated intercourse with the most distant countries. Mohammedan mosques, Christian churches, and mission schools looked after the religious and moral education of the young. The land was inhabited by the most diverse tribes, many of which lived in hostility

with one another, but were compelled by the strength of the Government to keep the peace.

Discontent, no doubt, prevailed in the land; and in the preceding pages I have shown how the avarice and misgovernment of the officials brought about a condition of affairs which rendered the country ripe for revolt. I have endeavoured to explain how Mohammed Ahmed took advantage of the mood of the people, and, well knowing that only a religious factor could unite the hostile tribes, he maintained that he was the Mahdi sent by God to deliver the country from foreign yoke, and to regenerate religion, thus bringing into existence that element of fanaticism which throws such a lurid glow over those dark episodes with which the history of the past twelve years of the Sudan has been so replete. Without fanaticism, the revolt could never have been successful, while with it one is brought face to face with a condition of warfare and religious enthusiasm, to find a parallel to which one must go back to mediæval history and even further.

In the preceding account of my life and adventures, in the vortex itself of this mighty religious movement, I have endeavoured to briefly trace, step by step, the principal causes which have led to the present situation, —changed greatly, it is true, from the time in which the Mahdi and his successor were in the zenith of their power, but nevertheless a situation requiring careful handling and a thorough knowledge of details, in order that those concerned may be enabled to grasp accurately the conditions necessary to restore to civilisation this vast expanse of country which has now fallen

into an almost indescribable state of moral and religious decadence.

In the Sudan, we have before us a terrible example of nascent and somewhat crude civilisation suddenly shattered by wild, ignorant, and almost savage tribes who have built over the scattered remnants a form of government based, to some extent, on the lines they found existing, but from which they have eradicated almost every symbol of right, justice, and morality, and for which they have substituted a rule of injustice, ruthless barbarity, and immorality. Nor can I recall any other instance in modern times of a country in which a semblance of civilisation has existed for upwards of half a century, falling back into a state so little removed from absolute barbarism.

But let us consider for a moment what is this new power which has suddenly grown up, and which seems to the European world to block so completely all their civilising efforts, which have during recent years made such startling strides in almost every other part of the vast continent of Africa.

I have endeavoured to show how, on the Mahdi's first rise to power, the entire country was with him heart and soul. How, on his death, real fanaticism gradually waned, and gave place to a temporary power wielded, under the cloak of religion, with reckless severity by the Khalifa and his western Arabs, who, taking the place of the Egyptian garrisons they had destroyed, ruled the unfortunate populations with a rod of iron, and with such oppression and tyranny as to make them long for a return to any form of government which would give

them rest and peace. It is needless for me to recapitulate the horrors and cruelties which have been enacted by the Khalifa and his followers in order to maintain their position of ascendancy; but it will be sufficient for my purpose to recall here that at least seventy-five per cent of the total population has succumbed to war, famine, and disease, while of the remainder the majority are little better than slaves; and that terrible scourge, the slave-trade with all its attendant horrors, is rampant in the land, and includes amongst its victims numbers of Abyssinian Christians, Syrians, Copts, and Egyptians.

The extent of country now governed by the Khalifa is little altered, it is true, from that occupied originally by the Egyptian Government, but with what a difference! Prosperous districts with a teeming population have been reduced to desert wastes. The great plains over which the western Arabs roamed are deserted, and their places taken by wild animals, while the homesteads of the Nile dwellers are now occupied by those nomad tribes who have driven out the rightful owners of the soil, or enslaved them to till the land for the benefit of their new masters. Deprived of the means of self-defence, reduced by oppression and tyranny to a condition of hopelessness of relief from their foreign task-masters, their powers of resistance crippled, the comparatively small river populations which are left are little better than slaves. What can they do of themselves against their despotic rulers? It is folly to imagine that the country can right itself by internal revolt. The helping hand must come from without; and the local populations must realise that the first step to re-establish Government authority having been

taken, there will be no drawing back. They must be convinced that the Khalifa's power is doomed, and that the bright era of civilisation is assuredly returning. Then, and not till then, will they heartily throw in their lot with the advancing forces, and lend their aid in breaking down the power of the now waning Mahdist Empire. Let it not, however, be supposed that, although I describe this power as declining, it is likely of itself to become extinct within a comparatively short period. A careful perusal of the last few chapters will, I think, make it clear to all that the means taken by the Khalifa to render his position secure against his internal enemies has been most thoroughly effective, and, assuming that his authority is not threatened by external influences, I see no cause why, as long as he is alive, he should not maintain his ascendancy. With his death, it is more than probable some internal revulsion will take place, which might, under certain circumstances, displace the dynasty he has attempted to found, but which would not necessarily bring that unfortunate country much nearer to civilising influences than it is at present. Considered, therefore, from this point of view, the necessary palliative still lies in the introduction of external aid.

The above hypothesis does not, however, entirely meet the conditions of the case. Those who wish to study the present situation in the Sudan must not think of that country as it was in the days of Ismail Pasha, when the civilising influence was represented by the Egyptian Government, and when the various countries lying immediately beyond the Egyptian sphere were barbarous or Pagan states, in which Europeans were

almost unknown, and the Arab slave-hunter had barely penetrated; that condition has been little else than reversed. The Mahdist authority, as I have already shown, is at once intolerably obstructive and dangerously insecure. The once comparatively civilised Sudan is now occupied by a barbaric power hostile to both European and Ottoman influence. It blocks the way from the central plateaus along the Nile valley to the Mediterranean; it seals up districts which were at one time fairly tranquil, and open to the influences of commerce and civilisation, while the various countries by which it is bordered are now being gradually opened up. Intercourse between them and the outside world is becoming easier; trade is pushing obstacles out of the way; risk to life is lessened by the protective action of European governments; and the savage races by which they are peopled, are beginning to learn the folly of fighting against the resources of civilisation.

To turn from generalisation to details, what do we find to be the present situation? On the east, Egyptian influence is slowly—very slowly—recovering its lost ground in the vicinity of Suakin and Tokar. To the southeast, the Italians have captured Kassala, and have forced the Mahdists to take up a strong line of defence on the west bank of the Atbara River. Further south, the Abyssinians show no present intention of altering the relations which have previously existed between them and the Dervishes. In the mountainous districts of Fazoglu and the Blue Nile, the inhabitants have thrown off allegiance to the Khalifa. Far away to the south, at the sources of the Nile, British influence is beginning to make itself felt in those regions where Speke, Grant, Baker, and others

gained imperishable renown by their magnificent explorations, and by their efforts against slavery and the slave-trade,—regions which will ere long be connected with the coast by a railway which will open up not only the country it traverses, but will also give an exit to the trade of Southern Equatoria and the adjacent countries. Next to these British possessions comes the Congo Free State, which within the last few years has made such gigantic strides in bringing under its influence large tracts of country, not only in the vicinity of the Mbomu and Ubangi, but in many districts of the Bahr el Ghazal Province and in Equatoria, almost to within striking distance of the Dervish advanced post at Reggaf in the Nile valley, while behind them, in the Haute Ubangi, or even in juxtaposition with them, the enterprising French pioneers are striving to give effect to their colonial dreams, which have of late years been so fully realised in various parts of Africa. Still further to the northwest, the Khalifa's authority in those districts is menaced by hostile tribesmen who may, sooner or later, become subject to the guidance of European influence penetrating from the west and north of Africa; and, on the extreme north, lies the Egyptian power, which Abdullahi is gradually learning to dread, as being that most likely to be the first to interfere with the uncertain tenure of his empire.

Such, then, is briefly the present defensive and offensive position of the Mahdist Sudan. All-powerful within his dominions, but threatened from all sides from without, there is little doubt that before the onward march of civilising forces the whole empire of the Khalifa must crumble and collapse,—and what then? Will Egypt once more become the actual possessor of the country of which she

was the legitimate owner? Will all those civilising powers who are marching forward unselfishly realise that should they establish themselves on the banks of the navigable Nile, they must not attempt to cut off or minimise the life-giving water supply of Egypt by introducing skilled irrigation within the territories they may have acquired? Will they unselfishly abandon the advantages which they may have secured through the expenditure of blood and treasure, in order that the legitimate rights of Egypt may not be interfered with? All these questions enter into the domain of practical and current politics, with which it is not my province to deal. I am merely in the position of expressing my views on the importance and value of the Sudan to Egypt; and on this subject I hold a strong opinion. The reasons which first prompted Mohammed Ali, three quarters of a century ago, to take possession of the Sudan, still hold good. As the Nile is the life of Egypt, so every effort must be made to preserve the Nile valley from intrusion. Any advance, therefore, of civilising influences towards that gigantic waterway must naturally be viewed with alarm by those authorities who are fully alive to the danger which would arise by the creation, on the banks of the river, of colonies whose personal interests would predominate over their regard for the preservation and advancement of Egyptian welfare and prosperity.

Here and there, in the preceding pages, I have referred to the immense importance of the Bahr el Ghazal; and it is perhaps not out of place here to recapitulate once again the peculiar position which this province holds in regard to the remainder of the Sudan. It is a most fertile district, extending over an enormous

area, watered by a labyrinth of streams, and covered with mountains and forests in which elephants abound, while the low valleys are subject to inundations. The soil is exceptionally good, producing quantities of cotton and India-rubber. There are cattle in abundance; and I estimate the population at between five and six millions. They are capable of making excellent soldiers. Moreover, the continual feuds between the various tribes prevent any combination of the inhabitants as a whole; hence the ease with which foreigners can obtain an ascendancy in the province, and create an efficient local army.

The port of the Bahr el Ghazal was Meshra er Rek. To this place steamers periodically ascended from Khartum, but were often stopped by the floating vegetation which from time to time blocks the passage of the Upper Nile. Just south of Fashoda, the river emerges from what may have been the bed of an ancient lake. Into this wide marsh trickle a great number of winding streams which are often completely blocked by the suds; and through these dense barriers travellers must at times cut their way with swords and axes. Sir Samuel Baker's expedition, 1870-1874, was delayed a year from this cause.

The geographical and strategical position of the province, therefore, with reference to the rest of the Sudan, renders its possession of the greatest importance. The presence of foreigners, unconcerned in the preservation of Egyptian interests, having at their command the vast resources of this great country, which are estimated at a much higher value in both men and materials than those of any portion of the Nile valley, would place

them in such a predominating position as to endanger any occupation by Egypt of her lost provinces.

In the preceding pages, I have described all I know of the movements of Europeans in these districts; and it is possible an attempt in force on their part to reach the Nile *via* Meshra er Rek, or the Bahr el Homr, or Bahr el Arab, might meet with some opposition from the Mahdists, but if well-conducted it would, in all probability, result in their losing their province.

If, therefore, the Khalifa were to learn that the "Whites" in the Bahr el Ghazal were in greater force than his present information leads him to suppose, he might engage in a campaign against them; and in this case he would be obliged to send reinforcements from Omdurman,—a matter of some difficulty, as the drain on his resources caused by the maintenance of large forces at the threatened points on the Atbara opposite Kassala, and in the Dongola province, is considerable.

Reverting to the Dervish situation in Darfur and Kordofan, it should be noted that the present force of the Emir Mahmud amounts to some thousands of rifle and spear men, scattered in garrisons at El Fasher, Shakka, and El Obeid. Mahmud himself resides at El Fasher with the bulk of this force, and is constantly at war with the Dar Gimr, Massalit, Tama, Beni Hussein, Hotir, and other tribes of the Kebkebia and Kulkul districts. Recently, one of Mahmud's lieutenants, Fadlalla, was killed, and his force of six hundred men heavily defeated in a contest with these revolted tribes; and, just at the time I left Omdurman, permission had been given to Mahmud to send out a punitive expedition from El Fasher, which appears to have been partially successful.

These tribes, although nominally independent, owe a certain allegiance to the Wadai Sultanate. It is, therefore, erroneous to suppose that they are acting under the direction of Rabeh Zubeir, whose hostility to Wadai is well known, and whose authority does not extend so far to the east, and now appears to be centred in the districts lying south and southwest of Lake Tchad.

Such, then, was the state of affairs in these southern and western districts when I left the Sudan; and, since my arrival in the midst of civilisation, I have frequently seen many strange and conflicting reports in the press as to the situation in these distant regions, and although concurring with the view that the onward march of civilising forces must eventually cause the collapse of the Mahdist Empire, I feel that my unique position in the centre of Dervish authority entitles me to give a word of warning to the country whose interests I endeavoured for long years to uphold, and whose eventual welfare and prosperity, in a recovered Egyptian Sudan, I earnestly long to see. I would merely impress upon her the fact that time and tide wait for no man; that whilst she is contemplating with longing eyes the recovery of her lost provinces, there is always the possibility that they may fall into the hands of others who may prove more difficult to dislodge than the Khalifa, and who, by bringing engineering skill on the life-giving waters of Egypt, may endanger its very existence, and who would—though it is undoubtedly the lesser of two evils—deprive that country of the rich blessings of trade and commerce which, under a beneficent administration in the Sudan, would give wealth and prosperity both to the parent Egypt and her recovered Nile provinces.

With these few words of friendly advice to the country to whose services I rejoice to have returned after twelve long years of captivity, I now end this narrative. But ere I close, I will relate yet one more incident which, were I superstitious, I would consider presaged well for the recovery of what has been lost. In December, 1883, when force of circumstances obliged me to surrender to the Mahdi, the sword of Austrian pattern which I had received on entering the Austrian army, and on which I had had my name engraved in Arabic characters, was taken from me. In August, 1895, when I came to London to attend the Geographical Congress, it was returned to me by Mr. John Cook, Sen., of the firm of Thomas Cook & Son, at his office in Ludgate Circus. It appears that Mr. John Cook had, in 1890, purchased this sword from a native of Luxor, on the banks of the Nile, his attention having been attracted by the Arabic inscription on the blade, from which my friend, Major Wingate, whom he met shortly afterwards, was able to decipher my name. It is, I think, likely the Mahdi had presented my sword to one of his followers who had taken part in the invasion of Egypt by Nejumi, in 1889; and when that redoubtable Emir was overthrown by General Sir Francis Grenfell on the field of Toski, it is probable that the wearer of my sword fell too, and the long-lost weapon was taken from the field by a villager, from whom Mr. Cook purchased it. To have lost my much-prized first sword in the wilds of Darfur, and to find it again in the heart of London, is almost more than a coincidence.

During the last sixteen years, I have led a life of strange vicissitudes; and I have endeavoured to narrate

as simply as I could my unique experiences, in the hope that my story may not only prove of interest to those who have shown sympathy with the hard fate of the European captives in the Sudan, but with the most earnest desire that these my experiences may prove of some value when the time for action may arise, and when, if God wills, my services may be utilised in helping to abolish the rule of my tyrannical master and life-long enemy, the Khalifa Abdullahi, and re-establish in that country the Government authority I struggled with some measure of success, but alas vainly, to uphold.

INDEX.

The following letters appended to names of persons signify: *A.* Ashraf, descended from the Prophet; *C.* Commander; *D.* Danagla or Dongolowi; *E.* Emir; *G.* Governor; *J.* Jaalin; *K.* King; *Kfa.* Khalifa; *M.* Mahdi; *P.* Pasha *S.* Sultan; *Sh.* Sheikh.

THE END.



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